O JEDNOŚCI KOŚCIOŁA BOŻEGO

POD JEDNYM PASTERZEM

I O GRECKIEM I RUSKIEM OD TEJ JEDNOŚCI ODSTĄPIENIU

przez

Ks. Piotra Skargę, S. J.

WYDANIE SZÓSTE,

oraz

SYNOD BRZESKI I OBRONA SYNODU BRZESKIEGO

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FIRST PART

CHAPTER I

On the Unity of the Church of God

Before seeking and learning about the true Word of God for salvation, one must first inquire about and come to know the true Church of God.

Holy Scripture calls the Church of God a house, and the Word of God it calls food and bread. The holy Apostle, exhorting his disciple Timothy, says:

> **"Know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth."**
> **— 1 Timothy 3:15**

And in the Prophet says the Lord God:

> **"Behold, I will send a famine upon the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the Word of God."**
> **— Amos 8:11**

For just as the body is nourished by bread, so the soul is nourished by the Word of God, as the Lord says:

> **"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."**
> **— Matthew 4:4**

From this even the simplest man may perceive that he must first know the house of God and become a member of its household, and only then partake of the master's bread, that is, the Word of God.

This same Church of God is compared to a mother who has many children, as Paul the Apostle says concerning the new Church, gathered chiefly from among the Gentiles, calling Jerusalem — that is, the holy Church — "our mother." And he brings forth the Prophet Isaiah saying:

> **"Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not... for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath a husband."**
> **— Isaiah 54:1**

And the Apostle says of himself in the person of the Church:

> **"In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel."**
> **— 1 Corinthians 4:15**

And elsewhere he says:

> **"I gave you milk to drink, not meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it."**
> **— 1 Corinthians 3:2**

> **“And the Gentiles shall walk in thy light.”**

One must first look upon and come to know the light of the Church, and only then make use of it and walk in it. For this reason, to those Patriarchs — our three Kings — Jerusalem was first illuminated and shown, to which the star led them, before Christ Himself was revealed to them. First they found that Church of God, and within it the Doctors; then from Scripture and the Word of God, which dwelt there, they learned of Christ.

So that everyone may know that no one can ever find the Word of God and the true Christ outside Jerusalem — that is, outside the Church of God — and therefore everyone who wishes to know the truth of God is bound first to inquire concerning the Church. For in it alone, according to the Apostle, truth dwells.

For this reason Augustine of Hippo taught thus:

> **“The Prophets,” he says, “prophesied far more obscurely concerning Christ than concerning His Church. I think they did this because they knew by the Spirit of God that men would rise up against the Church, tear it into pieces, and quarrel over it, whereas concerning Christ there would not be so great a dispute. Therefore that matter was more clearly proclaimed over which greater dissensions would arise, so that those might be condemned who see the clear prophecies concerning the Church and yet flee from it.”**

So far St. Augustine.

And the ancient Irenaeus likewise writes against the heretics:

> **"In the Church," he says, "God established Apostles, Prophets, Doctors, and all the other workings of the Spirit of God, of whom those cannot be partakers who do not come to the Church. Where the Church is, there also is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there are the Church and all grace, and the Spirit is truth. Therefore those who are not partakers of this Spirit are not nourished at the breasts of this mother (that is, the holy Church), nor do they drink from the pure fountain flowing from the body of Christ; rather they dig for themselves muddy cisterns from earthly ditches and drink foul water from that mire, fleeing from the faith of the Church and rejecting the Spirit lest they be taught."**

See then how this holy Doctor joins the Spirit of God and His truth so closely with the Church that one cannot exist without the other, and that the truth, the faith of Christ, and the Word of God cannot exist apart from the Church.

And the prophecy in Book of Isaiah concerning this matter is very clear:

> **"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be prepared upon the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say: 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us His ways, and we will**

> **walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of God from Jerusalem."**

See then how the Prophet says that the Word of God proceeds from nowhere else but from Jerusalem, which is the city and universal Church of Christ, now gathered not from Israel alone, but from all nations and tongues.

And just as everyone sees a mountain and first notices the house upon it before perceiving what is within the house, so too must one first come to know the holy Church, and only afterward taste and become accustomed to the Word, doctrine, and Law of God that are taught within it.

CHAPTER II

Outside the unity of the Church no one can attain salvation.

From this it is proclaimed and confirmed both by Holy Scripture and by the teaching of the holy Doctors that no one may hope for eternal salvation who does not enclose himself within the unity of the Church of God.

Clear are the words of Our Lord:

> **"He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth."**
> **— Luke 11:23**

And the holy Apostle says:

> **“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.”**
> **— 1 Corinthians 12:13**

Therefore, just as a member has no life if it does not remain attached to the body, so no one has salvation who does not remain in the unity of the Church.

This alone is the enclosed sheepfold of the house of God, which has its door and its doorkeeper, and every protection against wolves; whoever strays outside it shall not escape the teeth of wolves.

This alone is the city surrounded by a strong wall and supplied with every necessity and provision for spiritual warfare; whoever does not shut himself within it shall fall into the cruel hands of the enemies lying around it.

This alone is the ark in which men escape the flood; whoever does not enter it shall perish drowned.

This alone is the father’s house in which they partake of the fatted calf.

There alone is the wedding feast where the invited rejoice; outside it reign hunger and misery.

This alone is the vineyard and enclosed garden of the Lord’s delight, upon which alone His dew from heaven descends, giving life to the planted herbs.

Outside it nothing good grows: neither good works, nor almsgiving, nor fasting, nor even martyrdom itself and the shedding of blood for Christ avail or profit.

This alone is called the holy Church, because outside it no one can be sanctified or please God.

The herb of holiness and justification grows in no other garden.

In this house alone shine the light and rays of God; outside it the darkness of Egypt holds power.

Nowhere are the terrible plagues of Egypt and the wrath of God escaped except among the company and number of the people of Israel. Elsewhere there is darkness, but there always is light.

This alone is the house of Rahab, within which men escape death; whoever leaves it shall not escape the sword and destruction.

Rightly therefore does holy David cry out:

> **"Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. There — and nowhere else — is blessing and life."**
> **— Psalm 133**

The holy Doctors, both Latin and Greek, affirm the same.

Cyprian of Carthage the holy martyr says thus:

> **"He cannot have God for his Father who does not have the Church for his mother. If anyone could escape the flood who**

> was not in Noah's ark, then likewise he shall escape destruction who is not in the Church."

And lower down he teaches:

> "Even if a man should shed his blood for Christ, he still cannot be with Him if he refused to remain in the unity of the Church. Though he burned in fire and were cast to beasts to be devoured for Christ, he would gain nothing and receive no reward for his faith, but punishment for his unbelief."

And John Chrysostom writes thus:

> "Nothing so provokes the wrath of God as the tearing apart of His Church. Even if we should perform countless good works, we shall nevertheless be punished no less than those who tore apart His body, if we rend the fullness and unity of the Church."

It is therefore a clear matter that one must first be born of the mother and become a son of the Church, and only afterward partake of the breast of that mother, that is, of the Word of God. Children first learn to know their mother, and only afterward ask bread from her hand.

> "And God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Doctors, teachers and shepherds of souls."
> — 1 Corinthians 12

Seek neither the true Doctor nor the pure Word of God anywhere except in the Church. Outside the Church there is no sound and saving doctrine, save only in that city in whose dwellings, according to the Psalm, God is known.

One holy man said — as Cyprian of Carthage relates — something which may seem boldly spoken, yet it was nevertheless spoken:

> **"This sin" (that is, schism) "cannot be washed away even by the blood of martyrdom."**

Tell me, I pray thee: why dost thou undertake martyrdom? Is it not for the honor of Christ? And how dost thou give thy life for Christ while tearing apart His Church, for which He Himself gave His life?

Augustine of Hippo likewise teaches:

> **"No one comes to salvation and eternal life except he who has Christ as his Head. But he cannot have Him as Head who is not in His body — and His body is the Church."**

And in another place he says:

> **"Whosoever is separated from the universal Church, even if he should live an otherwise praiseworthy life, by this very sin — that he is separated from the unity of the Church — he cannot have life, but the wrath of God remains upon him."**

Gregory the Great writes thus:

> **"The holy universal Church teaches that no one can truly be saved outside of it."**

And the Fourth Council of the Lateran, at which the Greeks also were present with their Patriarch and Bishops, gives this decree:

> **"There is one universal Church of the faithful, outside of which no one at all can be saved."**

CHAPTER III

By what marks the true Church may be known, and which are its surest signs.

Every sect claims itself to be the true Church of God; but when it comes to signs and proofs, none of them can show signs proper to itself alone, such as could not also apply to another.

All those sects which have arisen in our times set forth as the marks of the true Church of God the true preaching of the Gospel and the true administration of the Sacraments. Yet these two marks are common to all of them according to their own understanding. For every sect attributes these things to itself and covers itself with them.

But the proper marks of a thing which someone wishes to identify must not be common to others, but belong solely and properly to that thing itself. For it would be vain for someone to identify David to me merely by saying that he has two hands and two feet, since everyone has those;

rather he must be identified by that which does not equally apply to another.

Likewise, the certainty of religions must not be judged according to what anyone thinks of himself, but according to clear and manifest truth.

Every sect, according to its own opinion, maintains that it possesses the true Word of God; but according to truth and reality, that Word of God dwells only with the Church of God itself.

Therefore it is necessary to seek other signs — surer and proper ones — such that no sect could by any means claim them for itself.

And these are described in the First Council of Nicaea Creed, where the Holy Spirit teaches us:

> **"I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church."**

No sect has dared, nor can dare, to cover itself with these marks; nor does any heresiarch use them to identify and prove his church as the true one, except only the holy Roman Catholic Church, upon which alone — and upon no other — this cap fits as upon its rightful head.

The First Mark of the Church of God: Unity

The first mark of the Church of God is the unity and concord of all the members with the head, and among themselves. For concord is the mark of that Kingdom which shall stand forever.

As the Lord Himself says:

> **“Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation.”**
> **— Matthew 12:25**

And the Apostle teaches:

> **“God is not the author of division, but of peace.”**
> **— 1 Corinthians 14:33**

And when we speak here of unity and concord, we do not mean agreement in evil or in worldly things, but agreement in Christ Jesus and in the doctrine of His Law, lest anyone point to the unity of the Jews or of the Mohammedans. For that is not concord in Christ, but obstinacy and hardening in falsehood and blindness.

Catholics who obey the Roman Church, though spread throughout the whole world, possess one faith, one confession, and one understanding concerning every article of the holy faith.

As Holy Scripture says concerning the first Apostolic Church:

> **"The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul."**
> **— Acts 4:32**

And they fulfill the exhortation of the holy Apostle Paul the Apostle:

> **"That ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same doctrine."**
> **— 1 Corinthians 1:10**

If Satan introduces any division concerning the faith, immediately that infernal fire is quieted and extinguished. For all submit to one authority, and by appealing to Councils and holy Synods of the bishops of the whole world, and abiding by their judgments, they cast out heresies and errors and bring an end to all dissensions.

But with the sects it is the opposite. One is born from another; from one there spring ten, twenty, or more; and each introduces a doctrine contrary to the first from which it grew. One calls another false, and each fashions a faith for itself according to its own will.

They have no superior in the world, nor any head to whose judgment and sentence they would submit themselves. When they gather in their synods, not only do they fail to agree, but they multiply still more sects and creeds. If they arrived with six sects, they depart with ten.

For all are possessed by that innate pride and obstinacy whereby each insists upon his own understanding and refuses to humble himself before any head.

> **"Contentions are always among the proud,"**
> **says the Wise Man.**
> **— Proverbs 13:10**

They claim for themselves such liberty that each man may interpret Holy Scripture according to his own mind, without regard for anyone else, nor for the understanding of the whole world and all antiquity.

And Satan strives for this very thing, as Augustine of Hippo writes: that it should be among Christians as it was among the Academic philosophers, where everyone was free to dispute and oppose even the greatest truths, so that just as they perished through discord, the holy Church likewise might perish.

Concerning the ancient heretics, Irenaeus wrote:

> **"There is among them so much disagreement concerning the very same words of Holy Scripture. Let them first agree among themselves concerning what has been proclaimed in Scripture, and afterward we shall answer them."**

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> **“Let them first agree among themselves concerning what is proclaimed in Scripture; afterward we shall answer them. But we, following the doctrine of one and the same God and possessing the rule of truth, always speak the same concerning the same matter.”**

And elsewhere, speaking of the Valentinians, Irenaeus says:

> **"There are so many among them that scarcely two or three can be found agreeing with one another in doctrine."**

The same is written concerning the Marcionites by Epiphanius of Salamis and Theodoret of Cyrus, and concerning the Manicheans and Arians by Augustine of Hippo.

Rufinus of Aquileia and John of Damascus write concerning a hundred sects.

And regarding those who in our own times fell away from the unity of the Church, Friedrich Staphylus writes that already in his own time there had arisen thirty-two sects from the one Martin Luther. And after his time, one could count a hundred.

The Second Mark of the True Church of God

The second mark of the true Church of God is ancient endurance and steadfastness, which can never be overthrown.

For the Church of God, according to the Prophet Daniel, is a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed.

According to Gamaliel in the Acts of the Apostles, it is a work of God established not by human but by divine power, which men cannot destroy.

And as the Lord Himself says and promises, it is a house built upon a rock, which no power of hell shall overthrow.

Such indeed is the holy Catholic Church, which endured from Adam until Christ our God, and after Him has endured now nearly one thousand six hundred years — a permanence shown most especially in the Roman Church of Saint Peter.

As in the time of the Flood, cities and lofty palaces upon the earth fell, but Noah's ark rose ever higher as the waters increased, so likewise all other sects have fallen, but this same Church remains, and in the greatest persecutions flourishes.

Neither the former power of the Jews harmed it, nor afterward could pagan cruelty overthrow it. Finally, all the heretics striking against it only struck themselves down and perished.

Before Martin Luther, who began the present schism, which Church existed and was regarded in the world as the true one?

There was none except either the pagan, Jewish, Turkish, Greek, Nestorian, Hussite in Bohemia, or Roman Papal church.

If none of these was the true Church of Christ, then the Church did not exist in the world at all and had perished, and the divine promises concerning its permanence had failed — which is impossible.

But if it did exist and endure, then on which side among these seven was it found?

And since these new teachers acknowledge neither the Greeks nor the Hussites, and do not attribute to them the true Church, they are forced to admit one of two things:

either before Luther the Church of God did not exist and had perished, or else they must acknowledge the Roman Church, by reason of such permanence and long endurance, to be the true Kingdom of Christ.

As the holy martyr Cyprian of Carthage says: at first they boil with fervor, but after a short while they grow cold and vanish away.

And Augustine of Hippo writes:

> **"Let not these rivers gathered from rainstorms frighten you, brethren. Water runs in them for a time, but it does not endure long. Many heresies have already died out. They flowed in their streams as long as they could, and afterward the brooks dried up, so that scarcely even the memory remains that they once existed in the world."**

And the Psalmist says:

> **"The streams of the river make glad the city of God."**
> **— Psalm 46**

But heresies are like a violent rainstorm, from which the streets and gutters quickly fill with water, carrying all the filth out of the city, and with great force cutting trenches and pits; yet they soon cease, leaving behind dry places and dangerous holes.

Heretical doctrine rises quickly, and men of evil conscience eagerly receive it; yet it quickly dies away, leaving behind such pits that their blind followers, seeking pure water, instead find mud and break their necks in those ditches.

Theodoret of Cyrus writes that up to his own time there had been seventy-six heretical sects, all of which, he says, had disappeared and perished except for a few insignificant remnants.

And Augustine of Hippo enumerates eighty-eight sects, bearing witness that the greater part of them had already vanished.

Up to our own times, until Martin Luther, two hundred heretical sects had arisen. Some of them possessed many bishops, emperors, and kings who strongly defended their heresies and spread them widely. They wrote many books beyond number in defense of their doctrine; and yet all of them perished, and all their books came to nothing. Indeed, we would not even know that they had existed had the Catholic pastors and doctors not written against them — and only the writings of those Catholic teachers remain.

Who can recall the times of the Arian heresy without remembering how widely it spread and how firmly rooted it was? Yet it vanished like dust before the wind.

The doctrine of Martin Luther scarcely lasted seven years before Huldrych Zwingli began to extinguish it and plant another heretical doctrine of his own. Zwingli was then opposed by John Calvin, while in many places both were overtaken by the Anabaptists.

And those who still claim allegiance to Luther have altered all his teaching according to their own pattern.

Therefore Jerome spoke well when he said:

“I shall speak my brief and plain judgment: one must remain with that Church which, founded by the Apostles, endures even unto this day.”

CHAPTER IV

The Third and Fourth Marks of the Church of God: Catholicity and Succession

The third mark of the true Church of Christ is Catholicity — that is, the universality of the faith of Christ and its extension throughout all places and throughout all ages.

For Holy Scripture bears very frequent witness that the Law and faith of Christ were to spread and pour forth among all nations and tongues.

To His eternal Son the Father said:

> **"I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Thy possession."**
> **— Psalm 2**

And in another Psalm:

> **"The Messiah shall rule from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."**
> **— Psalm 72**

And the Lord Himself declares that His Gospel must be proclaimed among all nations.

And already in the Apostolic age, the holy Apostle Paul the Apostle says:

> **"The Gospel bears fruit and grows throughout the whole world."**
> **— Colossians 1:6**

And after the Apostolic age, the ancient Irenaeus testifies that in every region of the world then known to mankind, the Gospel and Church of Christ flourished.

The same is acknowledged afterward by the succeeding Doctors: Athanasius of Alexandria, John Chrysostom, Jerome, and Augustine of Hippo.

And in the time of Gregory the Great, and in the centuries following until our own days, under obedience to the Roman Church were all the eastern kingdoms, Africa, Spain, France, England, and Sicily — as the ancient doctor Bede testifies.

And Bernard of Clairvaux, in discourse with the King of Sicily, maintains that in his own time all eastern and western kingdoms were under obedience to the Roman Church.

And even in our own day this universality and catholicity is very evident in the Roman Church, since this Catholic faith, whose head is the Bishop of Rome, flourishes not only in Italy, Spain, France, Germany, England, Poland, Bohemia, Hungary, Greece, Syria, Ethiopia, and Egypt under the Turk — where there are many Catholics — but has also spread throughout the four corners of the new world:

to the east in the Indies,
to the west in America,

to the north in Japan,
and to the south in Brazil.

No sect in the world has spread so broadly or so far.

The Mohammedan religion, arising from the heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches, which still persist in the East, never reached the western kingdoms.

The errors of Martin Luther and the sectarians of our own day never crossed the seas into Asia, Africa, Egypt, or Greece; and even in western lands they occupy scarcely a few corners.

In Italy and Spain they do not know what Luther is, nor what the Augsburg Confession is; and if they do know, they loathe such madness as poison.

In Germany scarcely a city exists wholly given over to heresy. And wherever sects are found, they do not agree among themselves. Nowhere is there but one sect alone, but rather three, five, or ten differing ones.

But the Catholic faith is everywhere one and the same.

And as Augustine of Hippo says:

> **"The sectarian faith is like branches cut off: wherever they fall, there they lie, rot, and perish. But the Catholic faith, wherever it spreads, grows everywhere alike, like shoots springing from one trunk."**

The fourth mark of the true Church of God is succession from the Apostles — that is, an unbroken succession of bishop after bishop, priest after priest, people after people, from Apostolic times even unto our own.

Just as holy Matthew the Apostle, wishing to show the lineage of Our Lord according to the flesh, proving that He was of the house of David and Abraham, enumerated His entire ancestral line from Abraham to David, and from David to Joseph the husband of His most holy Mother — and this enumeration demonstrates that in Christ was the house and bloodline of David —

so likewise, when the Church wishes to prove that it is the true Apostolic household and lineage according to doctrine and faith, it displays the line of Apostolic descent, saying:

Christ our Lord spiritually begot Peter and made him an Apostle and shepherd of all the sheep. Peter spiritually begot Linus through ordination and the laying on of hands; Linus begot Cletus; Cletus begot Clement; and so forth.

And thus is fulfilled that saying of the Psalm:

> **"Instead of thy fathers shall be thy sons, whom thou shalt make princes over all the earth."**

Thus the ancient Tertullian proves that the Apostolic Church is in Rome by enumerating the successors of Saint Peter down to Pope Eleutherius, who in his own time sat upon that See, and he maintains that by such succession sects and heresies must be put to shame.

Therefore Eusebius of Caesarea in his Ecclesiastical Chronicle, though himself a Greek, and also Jerome and Prosper of Aquitaine, who continued the Chronicle after Eusebius, carefully enumerate this succession of the bishops of the Roman Church, one after another without interruption.

And Epiphanius of Salamis likewise enumerates the bishops of Rome and says:

> **"Do not marvel that we name each one so carefully. For by this the clarity is always shown" — that is, the clarity of Catholic doctrine and truth.**

The same is done by Optatus of Milevis: he lists the Roman bishops from Saint Peter down to Pope Siricius, showing thereby that among the Donatists there is no Church, because they do not possess this succession.

And he says to them:

> **"Show the origin of your chair, you who claim for yourselves the holy Church."**

The same is done by Augustine of Hippo: he enumerates the bishops of Rome from Saint Peter down to Pope Anastasius I and says:

> **"What keeps me in the Church of God is the succession of priests to the episcopate, beginning from the See of the Apostle Peter, to whom the Lord entrusted His sheep, down even unto the present time."**

If therefore those ancient holy Doctors armed themselves against heretics — who neither possess nor can possess such succession — by means of a succession of twelve, twenty, or forty Popes following one another in order, then how much more may we do so, who upon that Roman See enumerate more than two hundred successors after the Apostles.

And so that this may be better understood, one must know that the Church cannot exist without pastors and doctors.

And there is the true Church of God where there are pastors and doctors lawfully appointed with that authority which Christ bestowed upon them.

Concerning this the holy Apostle says:

> **"God hath set in His Church Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, and Doctors."**
> **— Ephesians 4**

And these are the bishops of whom elsewhere he says:

> **"The Holy Ghost hath made them overseers to rule the Church of God."**
> **— Acts 20:28**

Therefore where there are no true rulers and bishops, there is no Church. For just as a ship without a helmsman must perish, so likewise the Church cannot endure without shepherds.

Nor are they true pastors of the Church of God who do not proceed from Apostolic lineage through succession from the Apostles.

Just as under the Old Law no man could sit upon the priestly seat unless he traced his lineage from Aaron, so also now whoever does not show the line of Apostolic descent — that is, ordination and the laying on of hands, of which the holy Apostle Paul the Apostle frequently speaks — possesses no authority for governing the Church of God or administering the divine mysteries.

Since therefore the sects of the present day have no bishops, nor can they have any, because they lack episcopal succession through ordination and the conferring of authority, it is certain that the Church of God is not among them.

Someone may say: "Succession exists in the Greek Church; therefore the true Church of God must be among them."

To this I reply as follows:

In Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem that succession was long ago broken through the Nestorian and Eutychian heresies and through the devastation of those regions by the pagans.

In Constantinople it endured for a long time, and perhaps may still endure. But that See is not Apostolic, because no Apostle sat upon it. More than three hundred years after Christ it separated itself from the Roman See.

And we make this argument:

Where there is no succession of Apostolic descendants, there is no Church of God.

Yet it does not immediately follow that wherever such succession exists, there also is the true Church of God, if other things are lacking, as shall be shown below against the Greeks.

We demonstrate by this that among the Lutheran, Calvinist, and other sects there is no Church of God, because there are no lawful bishops and pastors proceeding from Apostolic lineage.

And concerning the Greeks we say that the Church of God is not among them because they stand convicted of heresy regarding the Holy Spirit and of schism, by three holy Councils:

the Fourth Council of the Lateran,
the Second Council of Lyon,
and the Council of Florence.

In this matter the Lutheran and Calvinist sects agree with the Roman Church against the Greeks, as is shown from their writings against Jeremias II Tranos.

CHAPTER V

The Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Marks of the Church of God

There are also other marks of the true Church of God found in the Roman Church which do not apply to any sect, though they are omitted here, since by the four already mentioned even the simplest man may judge rightly.

Yet I shall set forth several more for the greater confirmation of the truth of this Church.

Among the others, this too is a great mark of the Church of God: fruitfulness in souls and the effect of the living Word of God, where that Word is living and powerful and pierces the hearts of men.

The holy Apostle compares the Word of God to a sharp sword:

> **"The word of God is living and effectual, and sharper than any two-edged sword."**
> **— Hebrews 4:12**

And David says:

> **"The law of the Lord is spotless, converting souls."**
> **— Psalm 19**

Athanasius of Alexandria writes concerning those wise philosophers of old that they possessed great learning, intelligence, and eloquence, yet they could not draw even neighboring cities to their laws and

institutions. For their words were as dead things, proceeding not from the Spirit of God but from the spirit of man.

The Mohammedan Turkish sect has indeed drawn many people to itself, but not by the Word of God — rather by the sword, by fear, and by the allowance of every bodily pleasure. Therefore Mohammed taught that men should be compelled to the faith by the sword.

And the other heretical sects convert no pagans to the faith of Christ by their teaching, nor do they pierce men's hearts. They only corrupt Christians and undermine them, as Tertullian long ago said of them, so that they may build up their own fables.

But the holy Apostolic Church from the beginning, through men who were small, despised, poor, without armies, without polished speech or human wisdom, drew the whole world to itself: small and great, young and old, learned and unlearned.

And it called them not to the pleasures of this world, nor to doctrines easy for human understanding, but to faith in things impossible according to men, to things displeasing to flesh and blood, to the loss of possessions for Christ, to the loss even of health itself, to penance, poverty, and suffering.

Promising men nothing in this world and no earthly reward, it suspended all hope upon the invisible life after death.

At this Athanasius of Alexandria, Theodoret of Cyrus, and Augustine of Hippo marvel in their writings.

Several centuries after the Apostles, Gregory the Great converted England through the poor and humble monks of Saint Benedict.

Afterward Pope Conon, through Saint Kilian whom he sent as his emissary, gained over the great Frankish nation.

After him Pope Gregory II and Pope Gregory III drew the Germans to Christ by sending Boniface, who there suffered martyrdom — as even the German heretics themselves write.

Then the Roman See, sending forth its preachers, bishops, and monks, converted the Vandals, Slovaks, Bulgarians, Bosnians, Serbs, Moravians, Poles, Danes, Swedes, and many other peoples, without force and without any army.

Later Hungary was converted in the time of Stephen I of Hungary, where also Adalbert of Prague labored, having been sent from Rome.

Pope Eugene III drew Norway to Christ through Pope Adrian IV, who afterward himself became Pope.

And concerning a certain Saint Vincent, Antoninus of Florence writes that he brought as many as twenty-five thousand Jews and Saracens to the holy faith.

And in our own times, the priests of the Roman Church have gained so many hundreds of thousands of pagans in the Indies, and every day gather still more of them into the house of God.

Let the sects of the present day therefore show how many pagans they have brought over to themselves and to their doctrine, if indeed their word is so living, powerful, and fruitful.

That harlot only steals and seduces чужі children already baptized and instructed in the Holy Catholic Church, but she herself cannot bear children of her own, according to that curse:

> **"Give them, O Lord, a barren womb and breasts without milk."**

Their word is like poison to those who perish; and to those whom God has chosen for Himself, it is like a cannon without a ball or a scabbard without a sword.

And this too is a great mark of the Church of God: that there God confirms His truth with wondrous miracles, honors His messengers, and grants such signs to them as the seal of their mission and truth.

For a new faith and new and great things, the messengers of God require miracles, since without them men would believe irrationally.

Thus Moses, when establishing the Old Law, was sent with miracles.

Likewise the Apostles, when founding the Gospel and the New Law, possessed miracles as the seal of their true preaching, and thus established the faith.

The successors of the Apostles no longer require miracles, but only the showing forth of succession — that they are the true descendants and heirs of that faith which was founded by miracles.

Therefore, since the Roman Church shows Apostolic succession, this alone ought to suffice for everyone, just as one who produces ancient charters confirms his hereditary possession.

But the new faith introduced by these modern innovators, who proclaim great and unheard-of doctrines contrary to human reason, ought to be supported by miracles.

For even the holy Apostles possessed the Word of God and the Scriptures; yet because every Scripture can be distorted through false interpretation, they proved those difficult truths by miracles.

The present sects proclaim great and impossible things, namely:

that the whole world for more than a thousand years had lost the Gospel and the truth of God;

that the Church of Christ had fallen and for so many centuries no one knew where it was;

that the Roman Church and the Popes — from whom throughout the world the doctrine of Christ spread and overthrew pagan idolatry — are Antichrists;

that all the Doctors erred;

that faith alone justifies;

that man has no free power of the will;

that God is the cause of all sins;

that the Son of God is not true God but only man;

that all which the holy Church believed and taught for fifteen hundred years and more are mere fables, and that during all those centuries not one man perceived this.

These are great and novel claims upon which all human salvation depends; therefore they require not verbal arguments but seals and miracles.

Since such a faith is new and unheard of — or else long trampled underfoot and abandoned, if ever it had been heard of before — it requires miracles and clear divine testimony such as our faith possessed when it began from the Apostles.

The Jews and Turks never supported their faith with miracles, nor can they do so today.

Nor could any earlier sects or heretics before these modern ones possess them. And when they attempted to have miracles, they sought them through sorcery and diabolical deceptions, as did Simon Magus, whose legs Saint Peter broke when he flew through the air, and others besides.

The sectarians of the present day also wished to strengthen themselves by miracles, but they never could. What is written concerning Martin Luther and John Calvin may be read in Friedrich Staphylus and Jérôme Bolsec.

Moreover, throughout all ages miracles flourished in the holy Roman Church, and there was never a century in which God did not raise up wondrous men within His Church.

The first century had the Apostles, whose miracles are proclaimed by Holy Scripture.

The second century had the martyrs, whose miracles are testified to by all the histories.

The third century had Gregory Thaumaturgus, bishop of Neocaesarea, called "the Wonderworker," whom Basil the Great compares to Moses while recounting his miracles. The same is done by Gregory of Nyssa in his Life, and also by Jerome.

The fourth century had the miracles of Anthony the Great, Hilarion, Nicholas of Myra, and Martin of Tours.

The fifth century had the miracles enumerated by Augustine of Hippo.

The sixth century had very many miracles recounted by Gregory the Great.

In the seventh century, Augustine of Canterbury, a monk of Saint Benedict, while converting England after being sent by Pope Gregory, performed many miracles, as both Gregory himself and Bede testify.

In the eighth century miracles were performed by Saint Rathbert and Saint John in England, concerning whom the Venerable Bede writes in his history.

In the ninth century many miracles occurred in the French city of Soissons at the translation of the relics of Sebastian.

In the tenth century Romuald performed miracles, as recorded by Peter Damian, as also did Wenceslaus I, Ulrich of Augsburg, Dunstan, and others.

In the eleventh century miracles were performed by King Edward the Confessor, Anselm of Canterbury, Pope Gregory VII, and others.

In the twelfth century Malachy of Armagh, concerning whom Bernard of Clairvaux writes, was renowned for miracles; and Saint Bernard himself was famous for great miracles, as recorded by Geoffrey of Auxerre, who personally witnessed them.

In the thirteenth century Francis of Assisi performed miracles recorded by Bonaventure; and Dominic and Peter of Verona were likewise renowned for miracles.

In the fourteenth century miracles were performed by Bernardino of Siena, Catherine of Siena, and Nicholas of Tolentino, concerning whom Antoninus of Florence wrote.

In the fifteenth century Vincent Ferrer performed many miracles both living and dead, raising thirty-eight people from the dead; and Saint Antoninus likewise became renowned for miracles.

And in these present centuries God also raised up Francis of Paola, concerning whose great miracles Pope Leo X bears witness in his canonization.

God likewise raised up in the Indies in our own time Francis Xavier of the Society of Jesus, who, while planting the faith of Christ under obedience to the Roman Church in those distant kingdoms, was glorified by God through great miracles.

When his body was carried from Malacca to Goa, storms at sea became calm, and although his body had been placed in lime for fifteen months, it suffered no corruption, emitted a marvelous fragrance, and remains preserved whole even to this day.

At that same time Martin Luther cast off obedience to the holy Church and broke his vows of chastity.

A monk took a nun for his wife, stirred Christians to rebellion, multiplied many sects, and when he died in winter amid severe frosts, his body, enclosed in a leaden coffin, emitted an unbearable stench.

The Seventh Mark of the True Church of God

The seventh mark of the true Church of God is the Catholic name itself, which no sect ever dared to claim for itself; and if any did dare, it could not remain established under that name except the Roman Church alone and those who hold communion with it.

Long ago Ambrose wrote that to be in communion with the Bishop of Rome and to be called Catholic were one and the same thing. And Augustine of Hippo says that heretics would also like to be called the Catholic Church, but they cannot maintain themselves under that title.

Cyril of Jerusalem writes:

> **"When thou enterest a city, ask not where the church or house of God is. For the heretics also say that they possess the house of God and the Church. But ask where the Catholic Church is. For this name belongs properly to that Church which is the mother of us all."**

Every sect takes its name from the master who began it, as the martyr Justin Martyr writes: from Marcion come the Marcionites; from Valentinus the Valentinians.

So also today, from Martin Luther come the Lutherans, from Huldrych Zwingli the Zwinglians, and from John Calvin the Calvinists.

True Christians bear no such name, nor are they named after any Apostle or any man, but from Christ they are called Christians. Yet to distinguish themselves from sects and from others separated from the universality, antiquity, and steadfastness of the faith and Church of Christ, they are called Catholics, and they have remained under this title even to this day.

If the heretics call us "Papists," it amounts to the same thing and signifies the same reality. For Christ our Lord Himself was and is the Pope — that is, the supreme head of His Church — and after Him, through the visible succession of Saint Peter, the other Popes likewise.

Thus this name does not refer to one particular man, as among the heretics Luther or Calvin does, but rather to an ecclesiastical office to which all are subject.

Moreover, no one calls us by this name except our adversaries themselves. In Greece, Asia, Africa, the Indies, Italy, and Spain they do not call us Papists, but Catholics.

And even the heretics themselves grant us this name, and always must grant it.

CHAPTER VI

Under One Ruler Is the Best Government, Which They Call Monarchy or Sole Rule

All the reasoning of the ancient wise men — whether in natural philosophy, in the written Law, or in the New Law — whenever they considered good government, arrived at this conclusion: that the best and most excellent rule is under one lord and governor.

This was maintained by those first and wisest philosophers: Plato, Aristotle, Seneca the Younger, Plutarch, Homer, Isocrates, Herodotus, and others.

And among the Jews the ancient Philo of Alexandria, praising Homer's saying, teaches the same.

Among our Christian Doctors, both Latin and Greek, Cyprian of Carthage, Justin Martyr, Jerome, Athanasius of Alexandria, and others likewise uphold this principle.

And God Himself, as the Apostle says, having brought forth the whole human race from one Adam, implanted this order into human nature. For if, as John Chrysostom says, He had created two men at once, each would surely have become head over his own children, and thus there would have been two rulers. But because He brought forth all from one man, together with Eve his wife, He wished to establish one ruler over all.

Thus He inclined human nature toward such a form of government.

For just as in a household there is one master, so in a commonwealth natural reason among all the most ancient nations established one king and lord.

And God in His chosen people never wished for any other form of government. From Abraham to Moses, and afterward until Christ, authority — whether priestly, royal, or both together — always remained in one person.

And it is certain that among ranks of higher and lower persons (for where all are equal, there can be no government), no form can be made swifter, more stable, or better than one lord and ruler over all.

For since the purpose of authority is that men should remain in peace, unity, and harmony of mind and will, when three or four govern, they rarely agree upon one judgment and do not long remain united in it. Division among the people would necessarily arise, since some would follow one opinion and others another.

But one ruler, by his own judgment and authority, easily preserves all in unity and peace.

Kingdoms and republics have learned this by experience. When many lords governed, or when rule belonged to the multitude, they could neither expand widely nor endure long.

The Roman state, after expelling its kings and giving power to the people, scarcely endured four hundred and eighty years. And whenever great wars or disturbances arose, they were compelled temporarily to place royal authority into the hands of one dictator, nor could they escape great dangers otherwise.

But under one lord and emperor that empire spread throughout the world, and from Julius Caesar in the East to the last Constantine, it endured one thousand four hundred and ninety-five years; and in the West, from Charlemagne, almost nine hundred years.

The same is said of the African and Persian monarchies, which flourished greatly and endured long under one ruler.

Finally, since one Lord God Himself governs the whole world, no better form of government can be found than one fashioned according to this divine pattern.

Therefore some holy Doctors, writing against the pagans, proved by this argument that there is one God and not many gods: because the best government is under one ruler.

Thus whoever praises government under two or many rulers would logically have to make many gods, since nothing but the best government can rightly be attributed to God.

States and republics have learned by experience how harmful such government is and how incapable it is of preserving unity for long whenever two, three, or many rulers govern.

For they cannot long remain of one mind. One envies another; each seeks his own glory and advantage; each prides himself on equality and exalts his own house. Therefore quarrels arise, and soon they divide the state into factions or begin to push one another aside and diminish each other's authority, bringing destructive civil wars upon their fatherland.

This was seen in the Roman republic after the expulsion of the kings, when power was entrusted to ten rulers, and likewise at other times when they frequently shed their own blood in civil wars, until finally that form of government perished through them.

Our own people in Poland also experienced this when after Wanda they entrusted the kingdom to twelve governors. Their quarrels, jealousies, and plundering gave rise to Homer's saying:

> **"Mala pluralitas principum: sit ergo unus rex."**
> **"A multitude of rulers is evil: therefore let there be one king."**

And from that time for seven hundred years they never departed from monarchy and the rule of one ruler, nor returned to the government of many lords.

Moreover, where many rule, the commonwealth lacks complete, proper, and vigilant care for itself. For none of them wholly devotes himself to the common good; each leaves something to another and relies upon others. Thus, each pointing to another, all neglect what serves the common necessity or carry it out carelessly and without zeal.

But when there is one monarch alone, he directs all his desire and diligence toward the common good, using lords and officials as hands while relying entirely upon none of them.

And where not rulers but the common multitude governs — electing magistrates by shouting and clamor, judging appeals, and establishing laws — nothing can be more disorderly.

For among the populace there are more foolish than wise, and it is contrary to nature that rule should fall to the foolish.

Thus when such government existed in certain ancient Greek cities, outsiders mocked them saying:

> **"In Greece the wise deliberate, but the foolish give judgment."**

For their orators and wise men spoke, but the common people judged and decided matters.

Such a system cannot even govern a household properly, much less a republic.

For as Ambrose says, the multitude does not consider virtue or the common good, but is swayed by instability and uncertainty.

One of the wise pagans wrote that by natural law the more rational ought to govern those of weaker understanding.

And still better did Augustine of Hippo say that fools can live happily only by obeying and serving the wise.

Therefore, may God preserve us from such government — or rather disorder — where the populace rules.

CHAPTER VII

The Government of the Church of God Must Be a Monarchy, That Is, the Rule of One

No one can doubt that Christ our God, the highest Goodness, willed to provide His house, His Church, and His kingdom not merely with a good government, but with the very best government possible.

For since this bride is most beloved to Him, surely He sought for her the most useful and best things, and was not sparing toward her in them.

If He acquired this kingdom so dearly by His own life, then undoubtedly, loving it greatly, He established within it the most excellent form of government.

And since no better government can exist than government under one ruler, it is vain to doubt that He would establish any other form.

For what some say — namely, that He Himself alone is monarch in His kingdom and Church and that no other rulers are needed — contributes nothing to the matter.

For the question concerns not the invisible principal ruler and natural and eternal King, who is Christ Jesus the Son of God Himself, but rather His visible vicars, without whom the Church cannot exist, without whom there is neither doctrine nor Sacraments.

These He Himself established when ascending into heaven, saying:

> **"As the Father hath sent Me, so I send you... Go ye therefore and teach all nations."**

And elsewhere:

> **"He that heareth you heareth Me."**

Christ is our supreme Governor and King, who rules invisibly and spiritually; but He rules through His visible servants — Bishops, Pastors, Doctors, and Evangelists — whom, as the holy Apostle Paul the Apostle says, He established in His Church.

Therefore whoever attributes to Christ only an invisible rule and monarchy without visible ministers would necessarily have to cast out those very offices.

And among such Pastors, Bishops, and Doctors, there must be one supreme ruler who preserves and maintains them in unity and peace by judging their disputes.

For if there were not one such supreme authority, the unity of the Church would quickly be torn apart, and it would come to that very thing against which Christ Himself warned:

> **"Every kingdom divided against itself falleth."**

Moreover, if many bishops equal in authority governed the Church of God, there would be no one to care for the common good of the Church.

And it would be a miserable ecclesiastical government if every month or every year all the bishops from the whole world had to gather together in order to govern the Church — which is utterly impossible.

It would necessarily come to this: that they would entrust supreme authority to one man or to two, just as the Romans elected yearly magistrates with supreme power.

For three hundred years after the Apostles, the bishops of the whole world did not gather together, nor did they hold any universal Council before the First Council of Nicaea; and yet the Church of God throughout the world was not left without government and without a superior ruler.

And afterward scarcely more than one such council could be held in a hundred years.

Nor was it ever heard of, nor did anyone ever imagine, that the bishops temporarily elected someone to govern the whole Church, since they

knew of that one whom not they, but Christ Himself had established, as shall be shown below.

For if they had entrusted this office to anyone, they surely would have placed such authority in one of the five Patriarchs, who always held the foremost places in the Church of God.

Concerning the Patriarch of Alexandria, Jerome says:

> **"Tell me, by what right does the Bishop of Alexandria claim authority over Palestine or the Holy Land?"**

And John Chrysostom, writing to Pope Innocent I, complains about Theophilus of Alexandria because he meddled in the affairs of other bishops, saying:

> **"It is not fitting that those who are in Egypt should judge those who dwell in Thrace."**

This is said in order to show that aristocracy — that is, rule by many prelates and nobles — cannot exist in the Church of God, and indeed would be worse than rule by the multitude.

For heresy has never arisen from an ordinary man, but always from some bishop or priest who began a heresy and a division within the Church of God.

And heresies are like civil wars in a commonwealth, which are begun only by lords who are divided among themselves whenever government falls into their hands.

And how miserable would the condition of the Church of God be if it possessed no one capable of restraining contentious bishops and preserving unity and the common good.

Just as within one bishopric the individual churches are united and become one body under one head, namely their bishop, who according to the Apostle governs, appoints, and judges the priests, so likewise the bishops of the whole world cannot become one body unless they possess one head among themselves.

Without such an office-bearer the whole Church would not be one body, nor one house, nor — as shall be touched upon below — one kingdom.

And there must be one who judges bishops and punishes those who are corrupt, negligent, or contentious.

CHAPTER VIII

There Must Be One Visible Governor of the Church of God

In the Old Law, which was a figure and foreshadowing of the New, one supreme bishop and priest held authority over the entire Church, and God placed all the Levites and all the people under his spiritual rule.

Therefore the figure must be fulfilled, and the same kind of government must exist in the Church of Christ: namely, that there be one visible governor, just as there was then, lest the figure possess something more perfect than the living reality and fulfillment itself.

And if God so arranged matters among that people of one nation and one language that there should be among them one supreme priest who would preserve all in unity and in one faith and guard against the diversity of false pagan superstitions and many gods, then this is far more necessary in Christianity, where the holy Church is gathered not from one nation but from all nations.

Indeed, the greater the multitude of people embraced within the Church, the more quickly would unity be subject to division — especially since among men there are many subtle and clever minds and restless spirits, against whom the Apostle warns us, who seek their own profit and glory through division and discord.

Therefore there is an even greater need that for the sake of concord and unity in the holy faith there should be one supreme governor of the Church spread throughout the whole world.

And although this supreme priest cannot personally be present everywhere, nevertheless, just as a king who possesses many kingdoms and cities governs them through lesser officials, so he also can govern and preserve all in holy unity with the invisible assistance of Christ, his supreme Lord.

Moreover, Holy Scripture compares the visible Church to one body with many members, to a bride and spouse, to a sheepfold, to a kingdom, to a house, and to a ship.

Therefore one body must have one head — not only the invisible head, who is Christ as supreme Lord, but also a visible head for visible government, namely a visible man who is His Vicar.

One bride has one husband; a kingdom has one king; a sheepfold has one shepherd; a house has one master; a ship has one governor; and an army has one commander.

Therefore our Lord, while still bodily present with us and founding His Church, Himself alone was its visible head and governor, nor did He wish it to have any other form of rule.

And when He departed, leaving His Church behind in this world, He willed that it remain in the same government in which He had established it — namely, that one man should stand in His place over His household.

This He indicated in that teaching where He spoke of the faithful and wise steward — not of many stewards and governors, but of one whom the Lord appointed over His household.

And when Saint Peter asked:

> **"Lord, speakest Thou this parable unto us, or even to all?"**

the Lord made it known to him that it chiefly concerned him, whom He intended to place over His household, and that it belonged especially to him to know how he should be a good steward over His servants.

Thus John Chrysostom and other Doctors interpret this concerning Peter and his successors.

And just as it is honorable and useful that over many parish priests there is one bishop who appoints, teaches, corrects, punishes, and preserves the priests in good order and unity, so likewise it is greatly necessary that there be one over the bishops of the whole Church of God who would govern, correct, and reconcile them, and preserve ecclesiastical unity.

For divisions and heresies arise most often from bishops themselves, since they are the more powerful.

Finally, it is impossible that the Church of God should remain in one faith and in harmonious confession and doctrine concerning divine and saving matters unless it possess one visible governor, shepherd, leader, and judge.

For where there are many differing and obstinate heads, they cannot be brought into concord and unity of mind except through authoritative power and office, especially one established by God Himself.

This the modern sectarians have taught us and confirmed well by their own example. Beginning from the one Martin Luther, they have divided their confessions into almost a thousand sects and differing faiths opposed to one another.

And even through these sixty years they have not been able to arrive at one understanding, one confession, or one faith; nor have they been able to assemble any common council by which they might establish the unity of their beliefs.

Indeed, whenever three different sects gather together, they always give birth to a fourth, a fifth, or a tenth.

And this is because they neither possess nor can possess — apart from that which exists in the Catholic Church — any judge, one shepherd, and governor to whom, by God's command, they would owe obedience and upon whose judgment they would rest.

Nor do they even desire such authority.

Therefore, devouring and biting one another, they shall consume themselves and soon perish.

But the holy Church, preserving concord and unity under one Shepherd, has endured and shall endure forever.

And if someone should say that Christ alone is the head of His Church, and that if there be another, then one body would have two heads, let him know that there is a great difference between the eternal supreme Lord and a temporal vicar and representative.

Christ, as supreme Lord, is head not only over this visible Church on earth, but also over the heavenly Church and over that which is in purgatory; over those past, present, and yet to come.

But the ecclesiastical superior of whom we speak has authority only over that portion of the Church which is upon earth.

Christ is the eternal and unchangeable Head, whereas the ruler on earth exists only for a time — either until his death or as long as his office endures.

Christ is in His Church as Lord and heir; the earthly superior is only a servant and temporal vicar.

Christ in His Church and kingdom may establish whatever laws He wills, change the Sacraments, and grant grace and salvation even without the Sacraments; but the earthly superior cannot do this. He merely executes the law of his Lord; he cannot alter the Sacraments nor bring anyone to the grace of God apart from them.

Christ has no successor in His office, for He Himself is the eternal Head and King of His Church; but earthly rulers do have successors, one after another entering into the vicariate of Christ.

Christ teaches invisibly and governs His Church secretly through the Holy Spirit, as it were through letters; but the earthly superior teaches visibly and governs directly by spoken word.

Just as a king sitting in Poland governs the Grand Duchy of Lithuania or Livonia — lands in which he may perhaps never personally appear — through governors and letters, so likewise Christ governs through His visible ministers.

Therefore in such a government there are not two heads but one. For the visible head is neither equal nor opposed to the invisible one, but rather subject to it.

Just as in the human body there are two forms of governance — one through the outward senses, through the eyes, ears, and movement, and another through the hidden and invisible veins and bones — yet there remains only one head.

Nor is any injury done to Christ when His vicar is called the head of the Church.

For Christ Himself, though He is the Light of the world, called the Apostles the light of the world.

Though He Himself is the foundation of the Church, Paul the Apostle also calls the Apostles foundations.

Though He Himself is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, the Holy Spirit grants those same titles to others as well.

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Though He Himself is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, the Holy Spirit grants those same titles to others as well.

And indeed, though He Himself is God, He nevertheless calls men gods — but in another manner and in another sense.

He Himself is the Head as the heir and supreme Lord of His Church; yet He also calls Peter the head or rock, as one appointed by Him and as His vicar.

CHAPTER IX

Christ Appointed One Supreme Shepherd of His Whole Church After Him: Saint Peter

First of all, the Lord Jesus promised Saint Peter that He would make him the foundation and rock of the holy Church, saying:

> **"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church."**
> **— Matthew 16:18**

Just as in a building the most important thing is the foundation, so Saint Peter was to be the chief officer of His Church; and just as the

foundation supports the whole structure, so his faith and office were to support all.

And although Christ Himself is that first, saving, and invisible rock of His Church, nevertheless He bestowed the same name upon His vicar, so that he might be a rock — not the principal and saving Rock, but one serving the whole Christian world in governance and doctrine.

Thus the holy Doctors, both Greek and Latin, interpret these words of the Lord.

Origen says:

> **"The Lord said to that ecclesiastical foundation and mighty rock upon which He founded the Church: 'O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?'"**

Athanasius of Alexandria, in a letter to Pope Felix I written in the name of the Synod of Alexandria and many bishops, says:

> **"Thou art Peter, and upon thy foundation the pillars of the Church, that is, the bishops, are strengthened."**

Basil the Great says:

> **"Peter, by reason of a faith greater than the others, received upon himself the building of the Church."**

Gregory of Nazianzus says:

> **"Peter, called the rock, received entrusted to his faith the foundations of the Church."**

Epiphanius of Salamis says:

> **"The Lord appointed Peter the first Apostle, the firm rock upon which the Church of God is built."**

John Chrysostom says:

> **"The Lord says: 'Thou art Peter, and upon thee I will build My Church.'"**

Cyprian of Carthage says:

> **"The Lord chose Peter first and upon him built His Church."**

Hilary of Poitiers says:

> **"O blessed gift of the new name, O rock of the Church, O blessed keeper of the heavenly keys."**

Concerning Saint Peter, Augustine of Hippo says:

> **"The Lord called Peter the first foundation of the Church, and rightly therefore does the Church honor that foundation upon which rises the height of the ecclesiastical building."**

Others are omitted for brevity.

The Lord confirms this supremacy of Saint Peter by another saying:

> **"To thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven."**

That is, the highest authority in the Church.

For thus in the Prophet Isaiah ecclesiastical authority is compared to keys, speaking concerning Eliakim the high priest:

> **"I will place the key of the house of David upon his shoulder; he shall open and none shall shut, he shall shut and none shall open."**

For when a man was invested with office, keys were laid upon his shoulders.

And even today, when cities surrender, they hand over the keys to the lord, who then entrusts them to the governor over the city.

This privilege does not extend equally to the other Apostles.

For the Lord says: "To thee," naming Peter alone in the presence of all.

Not "to thee, James," nor "to thee, Andrew," but "to thee, Peter the rock."

The Lord fulfilled these promises to Saint Peter after His Resurrection by making him shepherd of all His sheep.

He names him alone among the others:

> **"Simon, son of John..."**

asking him whether he loves Him; and He uses the same name which He had used when first promising him this office:

> **"Simon, son of John..."**

And therefore He says:

"Lovest thou Me more than these?"

thereby distinguishing him from the other Apostles.

And Peter himself answers, and himself grieves over the repeated questioning.

Then the Lord says to him alone:

"Feed My sheep."

By this word "feed" is understood governing, ruling over others, and possessing authority over them.

For shepherds are those who provide not only food, but also protection and every other necessity.

> **"The Lord appointed him over His household to give them their portion of wheat in due season."**
> **— Luke 12**

A shepherd considers not only what the sheep shall eat, but also where they shall dwell, how they shall be protected, and how obedience shall be maintained.

Therefore in Holy Scripture "to govern" and "to shepherd" mean the same thing, and kings themselves are called shepherds.

And by "sheep" Christ our Lord understood all His faithful, the whole Christian people, and even the Apostles themselves, Peter's companions.

For there was none among them who would refuse to acknowledge himself as Christ's sheep.

No father excludes any son when in his testament he writes: "I leave this or that to my children."

And how could the Lord divide His household and His sheep, appointing a shepherd for some while neglecting the others?

Thus the holy Doctors understood these words.

Epiphanius of Salamis says concerning Saint Peter:

> **"This is he who heard: 'Feed My sheep,' to whom the sheepfold was entrusted."**

John Chrysostom says:

> **"Leaving the others aside, He speaks to Peter, entrusting to him the care of the brethren."**

And elsewhere:

> **"The Lord gave great things to Peter and entrusted to him the care of the whole world."**

Ambrose says:

> **"Peter alone among the others professes his love to the Lord, and he alone is set above the others."**

Leo the Great says:

> **“From the whole world one Peter is chosen, who is placed above all nations, above all the Apostles, and above the Fathers. And though among the people of God there are many priests and many shepherds, nevertheless Peter properly rules all those whom Christ Himself also rules as supreme Lord.”**

Theophylact of Ohrid says:

> **“After finishing the meal, He entrusted to Peter the governance of the sheep of the whole world; and not to another, but to him He delivered it.”**

Bernard of Clairvaux says:

> **“And to whom, not only from among the bishops but even from among the Apostles, were all the sheep entrusted so plainly and without distinction? ‘If thou lovest Me, feed My sheep.’ Which sheep? Those of this or that nation or kingdom? ‘My sheep,’ He says.”**

And as for what some opponents say — namely, that the other Apostles received equal pastoral authority with Peter, and that they went throughout the whole world shepherding Christ’s sheep — this does no harm to the supremacy of Saint Peter.

For precisely because Christ entrusted the other Apostles to Peter, whatever they did, Peter did through them, since he had been given to them as commander.

Moreover, the authority of the other Apostles differed from the authority of Saint Peter in this: the others possessed all that Saint Peter had for the spreading of the Gospel throughout the world, for founding churches, and they possessed the Holy Spirit without needing the governance and oversight of Saint Peter — a privilege which no bishop in the world possesses.

Yet they could not leave such authority and Apostolic power to their successors after them.

But Peter himself was shepherd of all Christ's sheep, and he could leave his authority and fullness of power to his successors for as long as the Church of God and the sheep of Christ endure.

CHAPTER X

Testimonies of the Holy Greek and Latin Doctors That Saint Peter Was the Supreme Head and Chief Governor and Shepherd of the Church of Christ

First, Origen bears witness, saying:

> **"When the highest office concerning the feeding of the sheep was given to Peter, and when the Church was founded upon him as upon the earth itself, no other virtue was sought from him except love."**

Eusebius of Caesarea in his Chronicle says:

> **“Peter the Apostle, a Galilean by birth, was the first bishop of the Christians.”**

And when he enumerates the other Apostles, he writes thus concerning James the Just:

> **“James, the brother of the Lord, was appointed by the Apostles as the first bishop of the Church of Jerusalem.”**

But he does not call Saint Peter bishop of merely one place, but rather of the whole Christian world.

The same Eusebius of Caesarea calls Saint Peter:

> **“The most excellent and greatest among the Apostles, prince and leader and commander of the army of God even above the foremost.”**

Basil the Great, speaking of Saint Peter, says:

> **“That blessed one who was set above the other disciples, to whom were given the keys of the kingdom of heaven.”**

Gregory of Nazianzus, showing that order must be preserved in all things, says concerning Saint Peter:

> **“Thou seest how even among the disciples of Christ, all of whom were exalted and worthy of election, this one is called the rock, and the foundations of the Church are entrusted to his faith, while the others humbly bear their lesser place.”**

Epiphanius of Salamis says:

"Christ the Lord chose Peter to be leader of the other disciples."

And elsewhere:

"This is he who heard: 'Feed My sheep,' to whom the sheepfold was entrusted."

Cyril of Jerusalem calls Saint Peter:

"The most noble prince of the Apostles."

Cyril of Alexandria says:

"Saint Peter, as prince and head of all, cried out: 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.'"

John Chrysostom says:

"He appointed Peter shepherd of the future Church."

And elsewhere:

"God alone could accomplish this: that the future Church, though exposed to such storms, should remain unshaken, though its shepherd and head be a fisherman and not a nobleman."

And again:

"Jeremiah was appointed over one nation, but Christ made Peter ruler over the whole world."

Euthymius Zigabenus says:

> **"James received the throne in Jerusalem, but Peter was appointed teacher of the whole world."**

Theophylact of Ohrid, commenting on the words "Strengthen thy brethren," says:

> **"My clear understanding is this: 'I hold thee,' says Christ to Peter, 'as prince of the disciples. Therefore, when after thy sin of denying Me thou hast wept and come to repentance, strengthen the others. For it belongs to thee, who after Me art the rock and foundation.'"**

And further:

> **"Thou, Peter, after thy conversion, shalt be an excellent example of repentance to all, that although thou wert an Apostle and didst deny Me, nevertheless thou didst receive primacy over all and authority over the world."**

These are the testimonies of the Greek Doctors.

Now I shall bring forth the Latin witnesses, but first I shall add the teaching of one more Greek concerning this matter.

Hugh Eterianus lived around the year 1100 in the time of Emperor Manuel I Komnenos, and writing books against his fellow Greeks concerning the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son, he says:

> **“It is clearly shown that Christ made Peter and his successors rulers and heads not only over the Latins and the Greeks, and over all western and northern nations, but also over the Armenians, Arabs, Jews, Midianites, and over the eastern and southern regions forever.”**

As regards the Latin Doctors:

First, the holy martyr Cyprian of Carthage writes thus:

> **“When Saint Paul reproved Saint Peter, Peter did not say: ‘I possess primacy or authority, and therefore thou must obey me.’”**

By these words he indicates that Saint Peter indeed possessed authority over Paul and the others, but out of humility did not wish to exercise it against him.

And thus Augustine of Hippo interprets these words of Saint Cyprian.

The same Saint Cyprian calls Saint Peter:

> **“The head, source, and root of the whole Church.”**

Maximus of Turin writes:

> **“How great was the merit of Saint Peter before his Lord, that after governing a little boat he was entrusted with the governance of the whole Church.”**

Optatus of Milevis says:

> **"The See is worthy, and thou darest not deny that in Rome the episcopal chair was first established for Saint Peter, upon which Peter sat, the head of all the Apostles."**

Ambrose says:

> **"Andrew did not receive the primacy, but Peter."**

Jerome says:

> **"Among the twelve one was chosen, so that, once a head had been established, every occasion for schism might be removed."**

Augustine of Hippo says:

> **"He appointed Peter as head over all, that he might be shepherd of the Lord's flock."**

Leo the Great, Gregory the Great, Bernard of Clairvaux, and many others not listed here, all unanimously teach that Saint Peter among the Apostles was first, and that as head over the others he possessed authority and the pastoral care of all Christ's sheep.

CHAPTER XI

Saint Peter Was in Rome, Planted the Faith of Christ There, and There Died Crucified

From the Epistle of Saint Peter it is shown that he wrote that letter while in Rome, when he says:

> **“The Church that is in Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Mark my son.”**
> **— 1 Peter 5:13**

From these words Papias of Hierapolis, disciple of the holy Apostles, as Eusebius of Caesarea writes, affirmed that Saint Peter called Rome “Babylon” because of the idolatry flourishing there.

His words are these:

> **“Papias also says that Peter, in his first epistle written from Rome, mentioned Mark, and under the figure of Babylon called Rome by that name, saying: ‘The Church that is in Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Mark my son.’”**

It is not the Roman Church itself that is called Babylon, but rather the Church of Christ in Babylon — that is, in Rome — because at that time grievous idolatries prevailed there.

Thus Tertullian interprets it:

> **“Just as Babylon was the capital of the empire of Nebuchadnezzar, which persecuted the Church of God, so Rome in the times of the Apostles was the capital of that empire in which Nero, the cruel persecutor of the Christian Church, ruled.”**

And this Babylon, that is, the Roman Empire, Saint John prophesied in the Apocalypse would fall — which came to pass when the Goths, Vandals, Huns, and Lombards almost destroyed and ruined that empire.

Moreover, from the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans it is shown that before Saint Paul came to Rome, the Romans were already Christians and the Church of God had already been founded there.

Therefore let the one who opposes this show who first planted the Church of God in Rome.

But we demonstrate from many historians and holy Doctors that it was none other than Saint Peter.

For thus Irenaeus says:

> **"The Roman Church was founded by Peter and Paul."**

That is, first by Peter alone, and afterward by both together.

And Eusebius of Caesarea says in his History:

> **"Peter first opened in the city of Rome, by the keys of his Gospel, the saving proclamation of the word and the gates of the Kingdom of Heaven."**

The same is affirmed by Arnobius, Epiphanius of Salamis, John Chrysostom, Leo the Great, Theodoret of Cyrus, and many others whose words cannot all be included here for brevity.

Furthermore, great and distinguished witnesses write that Saint Mark composed his Gospel in Rome exactly as he had heard it from Saint Peter.

So testify Eusebius of Caesarea, Irenaeus, Jerome, Pope Damasus I, Isidore of Seville, and others.

Finally, from that history concerning Saint Peter, how he defeated Simon Magus the sorcerer in Rome, it is clearly shown that Saint Peter was indeed in Rome.

Concerning this write Hegesippus, Clement of Rome, Arnobius, Pope Damasus I, Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius of Salamis, Ambrose, Eusebius of Caesarea, Maximus of Turin, Augustine of Hippo, and others.

And that Saint Peter died in Rome together with Saint Paul is testified by their ancient tombs, to which people travel with devotion from the whole world.

For it is impossible that the entire world should have been mistaken concerning this.

Let the opponents name another place where these two Apostles died besides Rome. Let them produce even one ancient and trustworthy witness for it.

But we can name many witnesses concerning this matter:

Ignatius of Antioch, disciple of Saint John, in his letter to the Romans;

Dionysius of Corinth, who lived about a hundred years after the Apostles;

Hegesippus;

Eusebius of Caesarea;

Theodoret of Cyrus;

Origen;

Athanasius of Alexandria;

John Chrysostom;

Tertullian;

Lactantius;

Ambrose;

Jerome;

Augustine of Hippo;

Maximus of Turin;

Sulpicius Severus;

Eutropius;

Paulinus of Nola;

Isidore of Seville;

Leo the Great;

Gregory of Tours;

Gregory the Great;

Prudentius;

and very many others who wrote concerning the death and martyrdom of Saint Peter in Rome.

CHAPTER XII

The Bishops of Rome Succeeded to the Office and Authority of Saint Peter Which He Held Over All Christendom

The office and authority of Saint Peter could not perish or cease in the Church of God with his person and death.

For all offices and authorities exist not for the sake of the one who holds them, but for those whom he governs.

A shepherd is not a shepherd for himself, but for the sheep entrusted to him.

And since the sheep of Christ and His Church endure not merely for the lifetime of Saint Peter, but until the end of the world, therefore they must always have a shepherd.

And if during the lifetime of Saint Peter the Church of Christ required one supreme officer for the preservation of its unity, then certainly after his death it requires such government all the more as it spreads more widely among many nations.

Christ entrusted all His sheep to Peter — not only those then living, but also those to come, even those who shall exist until the end of the world — and these always require a continual and never-failing shepherd.

Therefore when our Lord said to Peter:

> **"Feed My sheep,"**

He understood not Peter alone, but also his successors, as John Chrysostom explains:

> **"Christ shed His blood for His sheep, and entrusted them to the care of Peter and his successors."**

And Leo the Great says:

> **"Saint Peter, abiding upon the firm rock which he received, does not cease to govern the Church. Peter remains and lives in his vicars."**

The Old Law was a figure of the New Church.

If there Aaron, the one supreme bishop and priest of the whole Church, had successors who after his death and the deaths of others entered into his office — and if the people were never without a supreme bishop and priest — then the same must occur in the New Law: namely, that Saint Peter, its supreme bishop and priest, should likewise have successors, and that the Church should never be without his office.

And that no one succeeds to the office of Saint Peter except the Bishop of Rome can be shown by many arguments.

First, it is evident that Saint Peter, dying in Rome, left upon that bishopric which he himself held — and which he transferred to no other

place — his privileges and authority granted for the whole Church, namely upon the See where he ended his life.

Saint Peter had his see in Antioch; but because during his lifetime he entrusted it to others, the Bishop of Antioch never claimed for himself the supreme authority of Saint Peter.

Indeed, the First Council of Nicaea places the Bishop of Antioch only in the third rank among the Patriarchs, whereas the whole Church of God has always attributed, and still attributes, the privileges of Saint Peter to the Bishops of Rome.

Therefore by divine right they succeed to his office after his death.

We may enumerate nine great Councils, or universal Synods, of the holy Fathers and bishops of the whole world, Greek and Latin alike, in which the authority and supremacy of the Bishops of Rome were testified and acknowledged.

At the First Council of Nicaea, the sixth canon — where it is set forth whole and correctly — shows that the authority and supremacy of the Bishop of Rome over the Churches was already in use, not established by any council, but given by Christ Himself.

For that Council assigns authority and territorial bounds to other Churches, such as Alexandria and Antioch. But it does not regulate the Roman See; rather, it establishes the others according to its example, saying:

> **“Let the Bishop of Alexandria govern Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis, since this is the custom of the Bishop of Rome.”**

That is, from ancient times the Bishop of Rome had entrusted such authority to him.

The second Council, at First Council of Constantinople, wrote a letter to Pope Damasus I in which it confessed that the bishops had assembled at Constantinople by the command of his letter delivered through the emperor.

There they also acknowledge the Roman Church as the head, and themselves as members of that head.

The third Council, the Council of Ephesus, acknowledged that it deposed Nestorius from the See of Constantinople by written command of Pope Celestine I.

The same Council wrote to Celestine that they did not dare judge the case of John I of Antioch, since it was more doubtful than the case of Nestorius, but deferred it to the judgment of Celestine.

The fourth Synod, or the Council of Chalcedon, repeatedly calls Leo the Great “bishop of the universal Church.”

And in their letter to Leo, the holy Fathers wrote these words:

> **“And moreover this heretic Eutyches extends his madness even against him to whom the guardianship of the vineyard has been entrusted by the Savior — that is, against thy Apostolic Holiness.”**

By these words the holy Fathers — six hundred of whom were present at that Council — acknowledged that Christ the Lord entrusted the care of the whole Church and vineyard to the Bishop of Rome.

At the same Council, when the letter of Pope Leo was read before all the Fathers, they all cried out:

> **"Peter has spoken through Leo,"**

thereby showing that the authority and privileges of Saint Peter for teaching the faith and spiritual governance remained in him.

Moreover, the Synod of Constantinople, which was held before the Fifth Council concerning Anthimus I of Constantinople — whom the Pope deposed as a heretic and in whose place he established Menas of Constantinople — speaks thus concerning the Roman See:

> **"We follow the Apostolic See and render obedience to it; and with those with whom it has communion, we also have communion, and those whom it condemns, we likewise condemn."**

If that entire synod acknowledged obedience to the Roman See, then certainly it was set above all the Churches.

The seventh synod, namely the Second Council of Nicaea, received and approved the letter of Pope Adrian I written to Tarasius of Constantinople, in which are these words:

> **"This See (the Roman See), holding primacy throughout the whole world, shines forth and is the head of all the Churches of God."**

The Fourth Council of the Lateran under Pope Innocent III, at which Greeks were also present, says:

> **"The Roman Church, by the disposition of the Lord, holds primacy of ordinary power over all others, as the mother and mistress of all believers in Christ."**

The great Second Council of Lyon, gathered from Greeks and Latins alike, calls the Bishop of Rome:

> **"The Vicar of Christ, successor of Peter, governor of the universal Church."**

The Council of Florence, at which the Patriarch of Constantinople with his Greek bishops was present, declared with the consent of all:

> **"We define that the holy Apostolic See and the Roman Bishop is the successor of Saint Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and is the true Vicar of Christ, and the head of the whole Church, and the father and teacher of all Christians; and to him in Saint Peter was given by Our Lord Jesus Christ full power to feed, rule, and govern the universal Church."**

Other holy and great councils or synods of the holy Fathers at which Greeks were not present are omitted here.

After this there shall be brought forth the testimonies of the holy Doctors, Greek and Latin alike, who unanimously teach that the Bishops of Rome, as successors and descendants of Saint Peter, possess authority over the Churches of the whole world and over the sheep of Christ.

CHAPTER XIII

Testimonies of the Greek Doctors That the Bishop of Rome Has Authority Over All the Churches of Christ Throughout the Whole World

First, the ancient Irenaeus writes thus:

> **"To the Church founded in Rome by Peter and Paul, because of its stronger preeminence, all the other Churches must resort — that is, all the faithful. For in it the Apostolic tradition or doctrine has always been preserved."**

He attributes to the Roman Church a strong supremacy bestowed by Christ, and understood that all should have recourse to this Church as to a mother, and receive from it the sound Apostolic doctrine.

Epiphanius of Salamis writes concerning the bishops of the Eastern lands:

> **"Ursacius and Valens, repenting of their sin, journeyed with their letter to the holy Roman Bishop Julius, in order to justify themselves to him concerning their errors and sins."**

And why would those bishops travel to Rome to the Pope and render account to him concerning doctrine and their offenses, unless they acknowledged him as the supreme officer of the Church?

Nor would Epiphanius have approved this of them if he himself had not agreed with them in this matter.

Athanasius of Alexandria likewise testifies that these two bishops sought pardon from Pope Julius I.

And in his letter to Pope Felix I he says:

> **"Therefore God has placed you and your predecessors, that is, the Apostolic bishops, upon the height of the fortress, and has entrusted to you the care of all the Churches, that you might help us."**

Basil the Great writes in a letter to Athanasius of Alexandria:

> **"It seemed fitting to us that we should write to the Bishop of Rome, so that he might examine our affairs and issue the judgment of his decision. And since it may be difficult for anyone to be sent from there according to the decree of the Council, let him grant authority to certain chosen men, who would endure the hardships of travel and who by gentleness and graciousness of manners, and by wise and moderate speech, might admonish those who have departed from the right path. And let them also bring with them the acts of the Council of Rimini, so that they may be annulled, together with those things which were there accomplished by force."**

Here Saint Basil the Great acknowledges that the Bishop of Rome could visit and reform all the Eastern Churches through his legates, could render judgments as a judge, and could even annul councils — though very great ones, such as the Council of Rimini, at which more than six hundred bishops were present — and overturn their decrees.

That great Saint would never have attributed such authority to him had he not regarded him as ruler over all the Churches of the world.

Gregory Nazianzen in verses concerning his own life says:

> **"The Roman Church has always preserved the true doctrine concerning God, as befitted such a city which holds supremacy over the whole world."**

He was not speaking of the civil empire, for by then the imperial power had already been transferred from Rome to Constantinople.

John Chrysostom writes thus to Pope Innocent I:

> **"I beseech thee to write that such unjust proceedings may have no force, and that those who have acted wickedly may be punished according to ecclesiastical law."**

Against Saint John Chrysostom, Theophilus of Alexandria had gathered many bishops at Constantinople, who by their judgment unjustly deposed him from the See of Constantinople.

He appealed to the Bishop of Rome and begged him to overturn their sentence and punish them.

The Saint would not have done this had he not recognized the Bishop of Rome as judge and superior over all the Greek bishops and indeed over the bishops of the whole world.

And in another letter to him he asks that he not punish such enemies of his too harshly, nor excommunicate them.

In this the Pope did not heed him.

For Pope Innocent I excommunicated not only Theophilus, but even the emperor Arcadius himself, his wife, and others, on account of the injustice and expulsion of Saint John Chrysostom.

Cyril of Alexandria writes to Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, that if by the time appointed by Pope Celestine I he did not retract his heresy, then all men should regard him as excommunicated and deposed from his see.

From this it is evident that Cyril regarded the Roman Pope as judge over all bishops, both Eastern and those of Constantinople.

The same Cyril writes in his books *Thesauri* — as cited by Gennadius Scholarius in his work concerning the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, and also by Thomas Aquinas:

> **"To Peter all bow their heads by divine law, and the primates of the world render obedience to him as to the Lord Jesus Himself."**

And again:

> **"We, who are members, ought to remain united to our head, the Roman Bishop and Apostolic See."**

Theodoret of Cyrus writes thus:

> **"I await the judgment of your Apostolic See, and I beseech your Holiness to grant assistance to me, who have appealed to your just decision."**

How would this Greek bishop of Asia have appealed to the Bishop of Rome and awaited his judgment if he had not recognized him as judge over all bishops?

This bishop had under him, as he himself confesses, eight hundred churches; yet he still acknowledges the Bishop of Rome as the supreme judge.

The same Theodoret writes to the Roman priest Renatus of Rome:

> **"They have plundered and exiled me from my cities, without regard for my years spent in devotion or for my old age. Therefore I beseech thee to persuade the most holy Archbishop Leo that he summon them by his Apostolic authority to his council. For this holy See possesses the governance and authority to rule the Churches of the whole world."**

The same Theodoret writes in a letter to Renatus:

> **“The Roman See holds the governance of the Churches of the whole world, both for other reasons and especially because it has always remained free from the stench of heresy, and no one has sat upon it who held false doctrine concerning the holy faith.”**

Sozomen writes concerning Pope Julius I:

> **“Since by the dignity of his See he was obliged to care for all, he restored to each bishop his church.”**

He speaks there concerning Athanasius of Alexandria and Paul of Constantinople, whom the Arians had expelled.

The emperor Justinian I writes in a letter to Pope John II:

> **“We shall permit nothing touching ecclesiastical matters of which your Holiness shall not be informed, for you are the head of all the holy Churches.”**

Let us be satisfied with these ten great Greek and Eastern witnesses, who so plainly acknowledge the supremacy and authority of the Bishop of Rome.

To these I shall now add Latin witnesses.

CHAPTER XIV

Testimonies of the Holy Latin Doctors That the Bishop of Rome Has Authority Over All Christians Throughout the Whole World

The holy martyr Cyprian of Carthage, writing to Pope Cornelius and speaking about the schism of the Novatians, who refused to recognize Cornelius as their superior and supreme shepherd, writes thus:

> **"Heresies have arisen from nowhere else, and schisms have been born from nowhere else, than from this: that they do not obey the one priest, nor consider that the Church must at one time have one priest who is judge in the place of Christ. If the whole brotherhood were obedient to him according to the teaching of God, no one would dare introduce anything against the college of priests."**

And below he writes:

> **"The Roman Church is the See of Peter and the principal Church from which sacerdotal unity has arisen."**

Ambrose says:

> **"Although the whole world belongs to God, nevertheless His Church is called His house, whose ruler today is Damasus."**

For at that time Pope Damasus I sat upon the See of Saint Peter, and Saint Ambrose calls him the ruler and superior of the whole Church of God.

And elsewhere he says:

> **"In all things I desire to follow the Roman Church,"**

as the head and shepherd of all Christ's sheep.

Jerome, writing to Pope Damasus, says:

> **"I, a sheep, ask help from the shepherd. I speak with the successor of the fisherman and disciple of the Cross. Following none as first save Christ alone, I am joined in communion with thy Holiness, that is, with the Chair of Peter. I know that upon that rock the Church is built. Whoever does not eat the Lamb in this house is profane. Whoever is not in the ark of Noah perishes in the flood."**

And below he says:

> **"I do not recognize Vitalis, I reject Meletius, I know nothing of Paulinus. Whoever does not gather with thee scatters. Whoever is not of Christ belongs to Antichrist."**

From these words it may be seen that Saint Jerome, though so far from Rome — namely in Antioch — nevertheless calls himself a sheep of the Roman Bishop, acknowledges him as successor of Saint Peter, and calls the Roman Church the rock and the ship or ark outside of which no one has salvation and no one escapes the flood.

The same Jerome acknowledges that while serving as ecclesiastical secretary under the same Pope Damasus I, he issued responses to the Eastern and Western Churches.

For to the Bishop of Rome men resorted from the whole world concerning spiritual matters.

Augustine of Hippo says:

> **"In the Roman Church there has always flourished the primacy of the Apostolic See."**

The same Augustine says to Pope Boniface I:

> **"God has seated thee by a special gift of His grace upon the Apostolic See,"**

and together with the bishops of Africa at the Council of Milevis, he beseeches him, as the head concerning diseased members and as the shepherd concerning his sheep, to provide counsel.

Victor of Vita calls the Roman Church:

> **"The head of all the Churches."**

Prosper of Aquitaine writes thus:

> **"The Roman See of Saint Peter has become the head of the world in pastoral honor; what it does not possess by political power, it holds by religion."**

Optatus of Milevis writes against the heretics:

> **"Thou canst not deny that thou knowest that in the city of Rome the episcopal chair was first established for Peter, upon which sat Peter, the head of all the Apostles, called the Rock, so that upon this one chair all might preserve unity. Therefore there is one chair upon which Peter first sat; after him succeeded Linus, after Linus Clement, after Clement Anacletus..."**

And he continues the succession down to Pope Siricius, who sat upon the Roman See in his own time, attributing to the bishops the privileges of Saint Peter for the preservation of the unity of the whole Church.

Bede writes concerning Gregory the Great:

> **"When Gregory governed the bishopric of the whole world and held authority over Churches long since converted to the true faith, he made our nation, enslaved by idolatry, into a Church of Christ."**

Anselm of Canterbury, dedicating his books to Pope Urban II, says thus:

> **"To the lord and father of the whole Church pilgrimaging on earth, to the supreme Bishop Urban, brother Anselm, a sinner in life, etc. Since Divine Providence has chosen your Holiness, to whom it has entrusted the guardianship of Christian life and faith and the governance of His Church."**

Bernard of Clairvaux, writing to Pope Eugene III, says:

> **“Let us diligently ask what thou art, and what person thou bearest in the Church of God. Who art thou? The great priest, the supreme bishop, the prince of bishops, heir of the Apostles. Thou art Abel in primacy, Noah in governance, Abraham in patriarchate, Melchizedek in order, Aaron in dignity, Moses in authority, Samuel in judgment, Peter in power, Christ in anointing. Thou art he to whom the keys were given and the sheep entrusted. There are indeed other gatekeepers of heaven and shepherds of the flock, but thou art more glorious, since thou hast inherited a name different from the others. They each have particular flocks assigned to them, but to thee all are entrusted — to thee alone all. Thou art shepherd not only of the sheep, but also of the shepherds themselves.”**

And below he says:

> **“The authority of others is confined within certain boundaries, but thine extends even over those who have received authority over others.”**

This great Saint, renowned by God with many miracles, did not know how to flatter. For elsewhere he freely rebukes the evil morals of superiors.

Omitting other Latin witnesses, I shall add only the testimony of the Latin emperor Valentinian III.

Thus he writes to Theodosius II:

> "We ought in our times preserve the dignity of due honor for Saint Peter, so that the most blessed Bishop of the city of Rome, to whom antiquity has handed down priestly supremacy over all, may have authority to judge concerning the faith and concerning priests."

And many more writers and holy Doctors of the Latin Church could be brought forward; but whoever will not rest satisfied with these will not believe even thousands.

CHAPTER XV

The Bishop of Rome Exercised His Authority and Supremacy Throughout All Ages Over All the Churches of the World, Including the Eastern and Greek Churches. First, He Convened Councils, Presided Over Them, and Confirmed Their Decrees.

It properly belongs to the superior and ruler in the Church of God to convene councils or spiritual assemblies, and to command the bishops to gather to them; and without his will and knowledge no great or universal synod or general council could be held.

Such was always the Bishop of Rome.

For there is an ancient Apostolic canon or law that no council should be held without the consent of the Bishop.

The ancient martyr Pope Marcellus I mentions this law in his letter to the bishops of Antioch.

And this law was confirmed at the First Council of Nicaea, as is testified by the Synod of Alexandria to Pope Felix I and Pope Julius I, and also by Sozomen and Nikephoros I of Constantinople.

The Popes exercised this right in convoking all the councils that were universal.

The First Council of Nicaea was convened by Pope Sylvester I together with Constantine the Great, as the Sixth Council acknowledges, and as Pope Damasus I writes in the *Pontificale*.

Constantine did not convene it by himself, but with priestly consent and especially with that of Sylvester, who had instructed and baptized him in the faith.

At that Council the same Sylvester presided through his legates: Bishop Hosius of Corduba, and the priests Vitus of Rome and Vincentius of Rome.

For these three sat in the first place, while Emperor Constantine sat among them not as judge, but as protector and executor of the Church.

And they signed first.

This is testified by the Greeks George Cedrenus and Photios I of Constantinople, who say that Sylvester granted authority to that Council.

And Athanasius of Alexandria likewise acknowledges in his letter *Ad solitariam vitam agentes* that Hosius held the first place and was foremost at that Synod, and that he wrote the Symbol or Creed which is called Nicene.

To this same Sylvester the Council of Nicaea wrote a letter asking him to confirm by his authority all that they had decreed.

The second Council, however, was convened by Pope Damasus I at Constantinople.

Theodoret of Cyrus writes that Emperor Theodosius I sent out papal letters to the bishops summoning them to the Council.

And the bishops themselves write to Damasus in these words:

> **"According to the command contained in the letters which your reverence sent last year to the most holy Emperor Theodosius, we prepared ourselves for the journey no farther than Constantinople."**

And in this same letter they call him their head, making themselves his members.

And Damasus, writing to them, calls them his sons.

These holy Fathers also sought confirmation of what they had decreed assembled at Constantinople.

This Pope Damasus I did, except for one canon which he excluded and refused to confirm — namely that by which they wished to raise the

Patriarch of Constantinople, as bishop of the New Rome, above the others and make him second after the Roman Pope.

Damasus would not consent to this, lest injury be done to the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch, who from ancient times held precedence over the Bishop of Constantinople; nor did he wish to approve the vain ambition for honor among those bishops of Constantinople.

The third Council at Ephesus was convened by Pope Celestine I, as writes Prosper of Aquitaine in his Chronicle, and Photius I of Constantinople in *De Septem Synodis*, and Evagrius Scholasticus, saying that it was done by the command of Celestine.

Cyril of Alexandria went to this council as the papal legate, and there presided in his name together with the two bishops sent from Rome — Arcadius and Projectus — and the priest Philip.

At this council, as Evagrius writes, Cyril declared that in condemning the heretic Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, against whom the council had been assembled, he had been compelled by the letter of Pope Celestine I, his superior, and that in his name he conducted everything there.

These same holy Fathers at the Council of Ephesus wrote to Celestine that they were reserving the case and judgment of John I of Antioch for his decision — that is, for him, as judge of all bishops, to pronounce sentence upon him.

From all this is shown the power and authority of the Pope, which he exercised over the entire Church.

The fourth council at Chalcedon was convened by Pope Leo I, as is evident from the letter of Emperor Marcian to Leo, wherein he asks him to hold a council and come to it, and if he would not come, then to indicate by letter how matters ought to be conducted.

And finally he says:

> **"I shall write to the bishops that they gather in a certain place, so that whatever is useful for the Catholic Christian faith, according as your holiness shall determine according to the ecclesiastical canons, they may establish by their decree."**

In this matter, let the doubtful man beware of thinking that the Popes, in convening councils, took counsel from the emperors and used their assistance for this because the emperors possessed authority over the councils themselves.

For it was not fitting to hold such assemblies without imperial permission, since emperors feared conspiracies or uprisings against their empire arising from such gatherings.

Moreover, at that time it was customary that bishops traveled at imperial expense and by imperial transport to the imperial city, and thus without the knowledge of the ruler of that city they could not hold a council there.

Yet the pious emperors never convened synods by their own authority, but only at papal initiative; and if they sat at the councils, they did so not as judges meddling in spiritual matters, but as protectors and executors of ecclesiastical decisions.

Thus was Marcian himself, who openly confessed this while seated among the bishops.

This Council of Chalcedon requested confirmation from Pope Leo I for the things they had decreed, through a letter addressed to him in which they acknowledged his authority over them.

Leo confirmed everything except the matter they wished to renew concerning the Bishop of Constantinople — namely, that he should be the first Patriarch after the Roman bishop. To this Leo never consented, and he wrote a severe letter to the Patriarch of Constantinople, rebuking his pride and vain self-exaltation.

From this it is evident that what the bishops of Constantinople had obtained at the second council possessed no force, since Pope Damasus I likewise had refused to consent to it.

At this same council all the holy Fathers gave to Leo the title:

> **"Aecumenicus, Universalis Episcopus"**
>
> **that is:**
>
> **"Universal Bishop of the whole Church."**

This title, however, the Popes themselves did not wish to use.

Likewise the Council of Sardica was convened by Pope Julius I, as Socrates Scholasticus writes, where he says that the eastern bishops complained against Julius because he had summoned them with too little time.

At the fifth council, the second at Constantinople, since Pope Vigilius was absent, Eutychius of Constantinople sat in his place and acknowledged in his letter to him that the synod ought to be conducted under his presidency.

At the sixth council, the presidents were Peter and George the priests, and John the deacon, delegated by Pope Agatho, as John Zonaras testifies. They spoke first and signed first.

At the seventh council, Pope Adrian I presided through his legates — Peter the archpriest and Peter the abbot of Mar Saba.

At the eighth council in Constantinople, the presidents sent by Pope Adrian II were Donatus and Stephen the bishops. Thus Donatus signed first:

> **"I, Donatus, by the grace of God Bishop of Ostia, holding the place of my lord Adrian, the universal Pope, by whom I presided at this holy ecumenical synod, have proclaimed and signed with my own hand."**

From the time the Greeks separated themselves from ecclesiastical obedience, as is written below, they had no synod, council, or ecumenical gathering, nor could they have one without the Roman bishop. Therefore they never attempted it, knowing that without the Pope it could not be done.

From such convening of synods, presiding over them, and confirming them, there is sufficiently clear evidence of the power and supremacy of

the Bishops of Rome, which they have exercised through so many centuries and continue to exercise to this day in the Church of God.

CHAPTER XVI

That the Bishop of Rome excommunicated and deposed patriarchs and other bishops when they offended, and placed others in their sees.

A very ancient and clear example of this exists even from the time of the martyred Popes.

When Pope Pius I, a martyr, decreed that Christians should not celebrate Easter together with the Jews on the fourteenth day after the appearance of the first moon, but rather on the first Sunday thereafter, the bishops in Asia refused to obey and preferred to remain in their own improper custom.

For this reason Pope Victor I, martyr and successor of Pius, excommunicated those bishops in Asia.

This is written by Eusebius of Caesarea, and it happened around the year 190 after the birth of Christ.

Already at that time the Bishops of Rome knew their duty and exercised their authority over the bishops of the whole world.

It is true that Irenaeus of Lyons and others reproved Victor for acting too hastily and for excommunicating so many churches over a matter they considered small.

Yet this all the more confirms the authority of the Roman Church, since none of them — not even Irenaeus — dared say:

> **"You acted unlawfully, having no jurisdiction or authority over them."**

Rather, all acknowledged the supremacy itself, though some disapproved of the manner of acting.

And afterward Eusebius of Caesarea praised this practice of the Roman bishops, while the first Council of Nicaea decreed that Easter should be celebrated according to the judgment of the Bishops of Rome, and not together with the Jews.

After the first Council of Nicaea, the eastern Arian bishops deposed Athanasius of Alexandria from the see of Alexandria and Paul from Constantinople; but when they appealed to papal authority, Pope Julius I restored them to their sees and excommunicated their opponents.

When John Chrysostom was expelled from the see of Constantinople by Theophilus of Alexandria together with other bishops — as Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos and Sozomen write — having been persuaded by the empress Aelia Eudoxia, then Pope Innocent I not only excommunicated and deposed the Alexandrian patriarch for this, but also anathematized the emperor Arcadius himself together with his wife Eudoxia.

Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos records the letter of Innocent in his history in these words:

> **"The voice of the blood of my brother John cries out against thee, O Emperor, as once the blood of Abel cried out against Cain. Not only the Church of Constantinople, but the whole world suffers loss from that sweet tongue and has in a manner been orphaned."**
>
> **"Indeed, this Delilah, thy wife, has shorn thee, adding sins to her sins. Therefore I, though the least and a sinner, unto whom the See of the Apostle Peter has been entrusted, cut thee off and reject thee, O Emperor, and thy wife as well, from the reception of the immaculate mysteries of Christ our Lord and God.**
>
> **And every bishop and priest of the holy Church who would dare administer them unto you from the time this letter of my excommunication shall be read, I decree that he shall lose his dignity.**
>
> **And if, as mighty persons, you compel someone to do this and transgress the law established for you by your Savior, then know this: on the dreadful Day of Judgment, where no worldly rank shall defend anyone and where all the secrets of hearts shall be laid bare, this shall be counted to you as a great sin.**
>
> **Arsacius, whom you placed upon the throne of the great John, we depose after his death together with all the bishops who**

> **adhered to him, so that his name may not be written among the bishops. For he is not worthy of that rank who anointed his bishopric through adultery.**
>
> **And moreover, beyond the deposition of Theophilus [Patriarch of Alexandria], we lay excommunication upon him and every curse and cutting-off from Christianity."**

This is written not by some Latin, but by Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, a Greek writer — and what is more, one living after the separation of the Greeks from ecclesiastical unity, and not a friend of the Roman See.

Yet the force of truth compels him to acknowledge the Bishop of Rome as the supreme judge of all bishops and patriarchs throughout the world.

In this case the Pope deposes two patriarchs from their sees and excommunicates many bishops who had consented to the exile of John Chrysostom, and no one says that he acted arbitrarily or unlawfully.

Rather, both bishops and emperors recognized their judge in this matter.

Pope Celestine I likewise excommunicated Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, before the Council of Ephesus itself, as was mentioned above.

When the fifth council was to be assembled at Constantinople against Theodore of Mopsuestia and the other disciples of the heretic Eutyches, Pope Agapetus I traveled to Constantinople.

Before the bishops had gathered, he found Anthimus I of Constantinople infected with the same error. Without delay he deposed him from his see and patriarchate and excommunicated him.

This Anthimus was greatly favored by Emperor Justinian I and by his wife Theodora, and therefore the emperor earnestly interceded for him and answered the Pope with threats.

But the Pope fearlessly replied:

> **"I thought I had come to Justinian, but I have encountered Diocletian."**

And drawing back his neck, the holy Pope said:

> **"I would rather lose this head than tolerate a heretic upon the throne."**

By these words the emperor, struck inwardly by the Holy Spirit, no longer wished afterward to hinder him in ecclesiastical matters, and himself repented of that heresy.

Then the Pope consecrated Menas of Constantinople with his own hand and seated him upon the throne of Constantinople.

There the Pope died.

After him Pope Silverius ascended the Roman See. The empress then again sought to have Anthimus restored and Menas deposed. Having softened the emperor, she sent threatening letters and envoys to Rome to intimidate the holy Pope.

When he had read her letters, he said:

> **"For this matter I must die, and yet I shall never do it."**

And he wrote back to her that he would never restore to that see the heretic who had been condemned and excommunicated for his wickedness.

Then the empress, despairing of success, conspired with Pope Vigilius, then archdeacon of Rome, promising him assistance in obtaining the papacy if only he would bind himself to restore Anthimus to the throne of Constantinople.

When Vigilius consented, she used the general Belisarius to drive Silverius from Rome, and within a few months Silverius died in exile.

Vigilius became Pope. But when the emperor and empress demanded fulfillment of his promise, Vigilius — now seated upon that See, transformed by the Spirit of God and by Saint Peter as the rock of the true faith — answered the empress thus:

> **"God forbid that I should accomplish with greater sin what I wickedly and foolishly promised. I shall never restore the condemned and excommunicated heretic Anthimus to that throne."**

Enraged by this, the empress ordered that the Pope be seized and brought to Constantinople, saying:

> **"Only spare him in the Church of Saint Peter; everywhere else seize him."**

He was captured in the Church of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere and carried off to Constantinople.

At first Emperor Justinian I received him with great honor. But when he reminded him of his promise, showing him the signature of his own hand, and he still refused to place the heretic upon the throne of Constantinople, the emperor ordered him beaten with rods and dragged by rope throughout the city.

And the patient Pope said:

> **"I have deserved even more for my sins."**

Afterward, having long remained imprisoned, he was finally restored again to his Roman See.

From this history anyone may perceive what authority the Bishop of Rome possessed, and how both patriarchs and emperors recognized it, and that without papal approval no Patriarch of Constantinople could ever occupy his throne.

Pope Nicholas I enumerates eight Patriarchs of Constantinople whom the Roman bishops deposed from their sees.

Pyrrhus I of Constantinople, as John Zonaras writes, had been deposed from the throne of Constantinople for the Monothelite heresy. When he outwardly performed repentance, Pope Theodore I accepted his recantation and restored him to the see.

But when his deceit and instability became evident, since he returned again to the same error, that same Pope deposed him once more from the patriarchate.

After him came Paul II of Constantinople, who revived the same Monothelite heresy. For this Pope Martin I excommunicated him.

And because Paul had influenced Emperor Constans II, the emperor ordered Pope Martin seized in Rome because he had excommunicated that heretical patriarch, and sent him into exile, where he died as a holy martyr.

This Saint Martin, at the Roman synod, excommunicated and deposed from their sees three successive Monothelite patriarchs: Sergius I of Constantinople, Pyrrhus I of Constantinople, Paul II of Constantinople.

Although he suffered death for it, he fulfilled his office and authority.

John Zonaras also writes that during the reign of the iconoclast emperors — those heretics who removed holy images from the churches — four successive Patriarchs of Constantinople aided the emperors in that heresy, persecuting and tormenting many people who refused to consent to their errors.

All four were excommunicated by the Popes, especially by Pope Gregory III.

Finally, when Paul IV of Constantinople, the patriarch who had aided the emperors in that same impiety, came to repentance and penance, he resigned the patriarchate of Constantinople.

When the emperor asked him why he had done this, he replied:

> **"Would to God that I had never sat upon that throne, once division arose between it and the other Catholic Churches.**
>
> **If we do not correct these errors by a Catholic Synod and ecclesiastical unity is not restored to us, we are lost and cannot be saved.**
>
> **I repent and weep for what I have sinned, and I flee to the mercy of God."**

Therefore the Greeks, together with the young emperor and his mother Irene of Athens, began petitioning Pope Adrian I to convene a general council or synod.

This became the seventh council, at which the Greeks were reunited with the Church after abandoning those heresies.

Soon afterward, during the time of Pope Nicholas I, around the year 858, a certain courtier named Photius I of Constantinople, through the favor of Emperor Michael III, seized the throne of Constantinople after expelling the rightful Patriarch Ignatius of Constantinople.

Ignatius appealed to Pope Nicholas regarding this injustice.

The Pope sent his legates to Constantinople and ordered that the Church of Hagia Sophia remain closed and sealed until his decrees were obeyed and Ignatius restored to his throne.

Afterward Pope Adrian II convened a synod at Constantinople, which the Latins count as the eighth ecumenical council (though the Greeks do not accept it as such, calling the Council of Florence the eighth instead).

At this council, 383 bishops once more condemned the iconoclasts and Monothelites. Photius was deposed from the throne, and Ignatius restored.

Nor did the Bishop of Rome exercise his authority only over the Patriarchs of Constantinople, but over others as well.

Pope Damasus I deposed Flavian I of Antioch from office, as Theodoret of Cyrus writes.

And although Emperor Theodosius I defended him, he nevertheless ordered Flavian to travel to Rome and justify himself before the Pope.

Athanasius of Alexandria, Patriarch of Alexandria, having been unjustly expelled from his see, was restored by Pope Julius I, as Sozomen writes.

Theophilus of Alexandria, as was mentioned above, was deposed from that same patriarchal see by Pope Innocent I.

Polychronius of Jerusalem, Patriarch of Jerusalem, was deposed by Pope Sixtus III, who sent there Pope Leo I.

Many other examples could be gathered from which it is shown that the Bishop of Rome exercised the authority given by Christ, as the Vicar of Saint Peter, over the Churches of the whole world, and especially over those bishops who held the first places, namely the patriarchs.

Upon what has been recounted from solid Greek historical sources, especially from ecclesiastical histories, every man not obstinately resistant may rest satisfied.

CHAPTER XVII

That clergy from the whole world appealed to the Bishop of Rome as to the supreme judge.

It is certain that he is the highest superior to whose court and tribunal appeals are made from lower courts and officials, as to the final and supreme authority.

Even in the Old Law, which was a figure of the New, God established this ordinance: that there should be one supreme tribunal to which the injured might flee, and at which all disputes and disagreements among the faithful would find their end.

Thus Book of Deuteronomy says:

> "If thou perceive a hard and doubtful judgment between blood and blood, cause and cause, leprosy and leprosy, and shalt see that the judges within thy gates disagree; arise and go up to the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen."

And below:

> **"Whosoever shall be so proud as not to obey the priest who ministereth at that time unto the Lord thy God, according to the judgment of the judge, that man shall die."**

Among Christians in the New Covenant — especially among priests — God forbid that they should remain without such a tribunal. For then disputes and dissensions among bishops would never cease, and their quarrels would quickly become the ruin of the Church of God.

Therefore Christ the Lord established the See of Saint Peter, to which, by very ancient custom and law, appeals were made from episcopal courts, and there the greatest disputes and controversies were brought to an end.

In the year 142, under Pope Pius I the martyr, Marcion of Sinope, having been excommunicated by the bishops in Pontus, came to Rome seeking justice and absolution.

Of this Epiphanius of Salamis bears witness.

Again, in the year 211, during the time of Pope Cornelius the martyr, Fortunatus and Felix, having been deposed by Cyprian of Carthage, appealed to Rome to Cornelius, as Saint Cyprian himself writes.

Later, under Pope Stephen I the martyr, Basilides of León, deposed from his bishopric in Spain, appealed to Stephen. This same Cyprian testifies to it.

And in the year 350, Athanasius of Alexandria and Paul I of Constantinople, having been deposed from their sees by Arian bishops, appealed to Pope Julius I, as Sozomen writes, as was mentioned above.

From this arose the canon of the great and ecumenical Council of Sardica, at which there were more than 330 bishops from the whole world, as Hilary of Poitiers and Athanasius of Alexandria testify — from Italy, France, Spain, Britain, Africa, Egypt, Syria, Thrace, Pannonia, and many other lands.

"And if a bishop shall be deposed by the judgment of those bishops who dwell nearby, and he should appeal his case to Rome, they are not to appoint another bishop to the see of the deposed one after the appeal has been made, until his case is concluded by the judgment of the Bishop of Rome."

This is explained more fully in the seventh canon.

Therefore even John Chrysostom around the year 400, having been deposed by bishops, as was mentioned above, appealed to Pope Innocent I.

Later, around the year 500, Pope Gregory I excommunicated John, the Greek bishop of Prima Justiniana, because he dared to judge the Bishop of Thebes, who had already appealed to the Apostolic See.

And because other regions were very far from Rome, the popes often had their own vicars or representatives in the eastern and other distant lands, to whom they entrusted the judgment of lesser matters and the

handling of appeals, while reserving the greater and more important causes to their own judgment.

Pope Leo I appointed Anastasius of Thessalonica as his representative in the eastern regions, just as, he says, his predecessors had done.

The same Leo entrusted his authority in the African regions to Potentius the bishop.

Pope Celestine I entrusted his authority to Cyril of Alexandria in the matter of Nestorius, and committed that church to him after deposing Nestorius.

Pope Gelasius I, in a letter to the bishops of Dardania, entrusted to Acacius of Constantinople the governance and oversight of Egypt, and ordered him to depose the Patriarch of Alexandria.

Therefore Justinian I says in his laws that the bishop of Prima Justiniana held authority over certain places as the vicar of the Bishop of Rome, because, he says, Pope Vigilius had so established it.

Likewise, anyone may see in the letters of Saint Gregory how, in his own time, he maintained various representatives throughout the churches of the whole world.

CHAPTER XVIII

Without the authority of the Bishop of Rome, Churches and Councils fell into error; but under it, as under the head, all the members receive blessing.

Without this Roman See and the mouth of Saint Peter, great assemblies of bishops wandered like sheep without a shepherd.

Without this Roman Peter, in Africa during the time of Cyprian of Carthage, more than eighty bishops established an error concerning baptism.

And at the Council of Ariminum, about five hundred bishops, without this head, allowed themselves to be deceived by the Arians and made a false confession in matters of faith.

At Antioch, ninety bishops confirmed heresy because, as the Greek Socrates Scholasticus says, neither the Bishop of Rome nor his representative was present there.

Likewise at Philippopolis, a great multitude of bishops assembled; but like an army without a commander, they were overcome by unbelief and heretical falsehood.

In Constantinople, in the same way, when the eastern churches wished to hold councils among themselves without the Pope, like sheep without a shepherd they fell into error and established the Monothelite and

Iconoclast heresies, which they soon afterward condemned under the guidance of the successor of Saint Peter.

And wherever they wished to establish anything concerning the faith together with Christian kings and rulers without this spiritual rock, they fell into error.

Thus that Greek Stephen (whom the Greeks consider a great saint), seeing that the Patriarch of Constantinople together with the other churches was gathering to hold a great synod, laughed at them and foretold nothing good for them. He rebuked them, saying:

"How can you gather and hold a synod without the command of the supreme bishop and without his representative?"

As though he were saying: "Other councils have ended badly for you without him, and this one also will fall into error; and without the interpreter of Saint Peter, the Bishop of Rome, you will not attain the true faith."

All Christendom has learned by experience that no one has arrived more firmly at the teaching of Christ's truth than he who sat upon the See of Saint Peter and held the office of universal pastor.

Therefore all Christendom continually fled to this Roman See concerning the confession of the true Christian faith, trusted in it alone, and rested upon its judgment as upon the words of Saint Peter himself.

Thus all the Ecumenical Councils followed the papal confession and called the Pope the interpreter of Peter.

And Christian emperors such as Gratian and others, amid the many divisions of the heretics, regarded those bishops as Catholic and orthodox who remained in communion with the Pope.

And Justinian I, writing to Pope John II, says:

"We permit nothing concerning ecclesiastical matters — even though they may be very clear and undisputed — to be decided without your knowledge. For you are the head of all the holy churches."

And elsewhere:

"We decree," he says, "that according to the determinations of the four councils, the supreme Pope of Old Rome is first among all priests."

Thus God wished it to be; thus our supreme Shepherd Jesus Christ wished it, so that the governance of His Church might flourish in obedience and humility, and that from the one head — His vicar on earth — His blessing might descend upon the members.

Oh, how remarkable and devout are the words of the six hundred and thirty fathers of the Fourth Council to Pope Leo I:

"You have preserved for us, by command of the Lawgiver Himself, the doctrine and faith woven like a golden garment from the robe of Christ, handed down even unto us, and you have been appointed for us as the interpreter of Saint Peter, bringing the blessing of his faith upon all. You presided over our assembly as the head over the members."

These are the words of the bishops of the whole world addressed to the Pope.

Such extraordinary and fervent devotion toward the Roman See from those six hundred and thirty holy fathers — humble and obedient men, lovers of Christian concord, peace, and unity, enlightened by the Holy Spirit — teaches us to await the blessing of Christ's faith descending upon us from this head, the successor of Saint Peter and vicar of Christ, the Pope, just as precious fragrant oil descended from the head of Aaron the high priest.

And it teaches us to seek life while remaining joined to this head as members, and to rest upon the bosom of this mother, following the example of all the holy fathers.

CHAPTER XIX

Conclusion of This Part of the Book

In concluding this part of our work concerning the government of the Church of God, you could understand, noble reader, from these great and solid proofs, how God, in the wise and wondrous governance of His Church, willed that this See of Saint Peter in Rome should be — and has remained until this very time — the Mother of the unity of His Church, the fortress of the Catholic faith, the support of revealed truth, the treasury of heavenly mysteries, the unconquerable rock, the boat that never sinks. Whoever is carried in it to that shore of the eternal Fatherland shall never be drowned by any heresy or unbelief.

Without this See, like a member without a head, everyone must die in unbelief. Whoever departs from this Roman Peter and Shepherd of

Christ's sheep shall not arrive at the truth of God. This same See is the guardian, cause, source, and preservation of ecclesiastical unity and Christian charity, without which no one can be saved. Without it reign discord, division, and schism, and Christian kingdoms perish; so much so that experience itself shows that not only spiritual blessing descends upon us from this one head, but also temporal blessing.

For whichever Christian state or kingdom separated itself from this head and from the unity of the See of Saint Peter fell not only into various heresies, unbelief, and spiritual ruin, but also into bondage and under the hand of the pagans, or else destroyed itself. But whichever firmly clings to this rock endures together with it, and no calamity overthrows it.

Finally, consider this alone within yourself, noble reader: how could it be that not only the bishops of the whole world and the holy councils, but also all Christian emperors, could endure and permit that the Popes should depose patriarchs from their offices, strip them of their dignities for their offenses, draw to themselves the spiritual judgments and appeals of the whole world; that they should even transfer empires from one nation to another; that they should appoint bishops and patriarchs to Churches not only against the will of secular rulers; but also depose emperors themselves from the empire when they were harmful to the Church of God, crown rulers over kingdoms, excommunicate kings and others, and take crowns from them — how, I say, could the entire Christian world have endured this, if it had not recognized in the Popes such great divine power and supreme authority over all Christendom, that is, over the sheep of Christ?

How then could it ever have happened that the clergy together with secular rulers would not long ago have destroyed the Papacy and overthrown it by force, if the popes had claimed such power for themselves out of pride, worldly ambition, or tyranny?

But they never did so, nor can they, nor will they.

And whenever certain wicked emperors dared to attempt this, they all perished miserably.

But this ship continues onward and remains renowned.

Having outlived every tyranny and every heresy, it stands firm like a mighty rock.

Moreover, since time reveals all hidden and secret things, and evil must eventually come to light, and whatever is not from God cannot endure — if there had been any impiety, deceit, or hypocrisy hidden within the papal office, it would already have been revealed to mankind over so many centuries, and long ago would have perished.

But seeing that through such a long and ancient span of time this See and all the privileges granted to it by the Son of God have only grown stronger and increased, even the simplest man may judge that it is from God.

And since throughout fifteen hundred years the whole world has found no injustice in the Papacy which it could rightly condemn regarding its office itself, except that what God spoke continues to endure:

"The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
— Gospel of Matthew 16

And His word is fulfilled:

"Your faith shall not fail."

And His promise is accomplished:

"Strengthen your brethren."

And from nowhere else, up to this present day, do we receive support for the holy faith except from Rome.

If the Roman Church did not exist, Christians would long ago, having fallen into heresy, have become pagans, just as this has already happened to others; and the Gospel itself would have been turned into Aesop's fables.

Therefore, noble reader, pray together with me to the Lord God, saying:

"O Rock of Thy faith, Lord and our God Jesus Christ, and Mother of all Christendom, and visible head of Thy flock, the most glorious See of Thy Peter, the Holy Roman Church — deign to exalt and greatly glorify it.

And bring back to Thy vicar, the shepherd of shepherds upon earth, all Thy rams and sheep, and gather them beneath the one staff of Thy governance.

Preserve this fortress, the guard and defense of the Catholic faith, upheld by Thy mighty arm unto the end."

“May Thy truth endure forever,
and may Thy promises be proclaimed from generation to generation;

that Thy prayer may bear fruit,
and that the faith of this Peter, never failing, may strengthen the brethren,

and may preserve all Christendom in Thy holy peace and unity —
without which no one can find Thee nor attain salvation.

Amen.”